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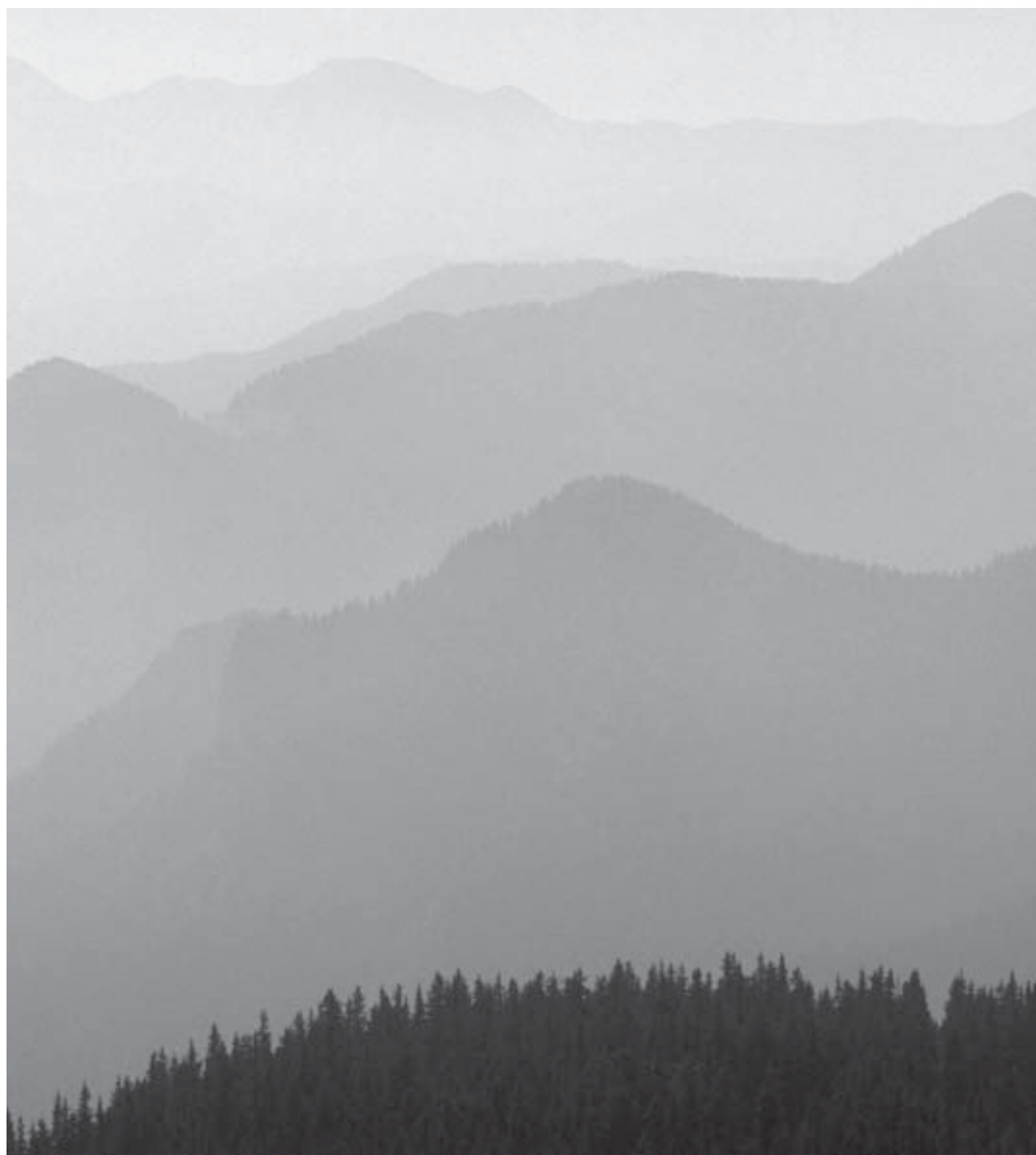
Democracy



Network Program

DemNet II:
Building
Civil Society
in Bulgaria

Final Report



Democracy Network Program

DemNet II:

Building Civil Society
in Bulgaria

1998-2002

**FINAL REPORT TO THE U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Photos, front and back inside covers:
Bulgarian landscapes; next page: DemNet-supported
activities of SO partners and NGOs working
for positive change in Bulgaria.

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The success of any project is in the hands of many people—the SO partners, the capable and dedicated ISC staff in Bulgaria, many excellent consultants who supported the program, and the Bulgaria USAID mission that provided sound support and counsel at critical junctures.

In DemNet II, the whole was infinitely greater than the sum of its parts. We worked together, learned together, and served together to contribute to a strong civil society in Bulgaria.

I. Executive Summary

In 1998, the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) launched the second phase of the USAID-funded Democracy Network (DemNet II) program in Bulgaria. DemNet II took advantage of the substantially solidified nongovernmental organization (NGO) sector that ISC helped establish during the first phase of the program to build the capacity and professionalism of organizations that provide support to NGOs. In DemNet II, ISC laid the groundwork for a vibrant, active NGO sector that will stimulate citizen participation as well as foster economic development, encourage democratic reform, strengthen social support systems, and serve environmental interests for years to come.

ISC held an open and transparent selection of 13 support organizations (SOs) to participate in the project. A diverse range of interests and geographic regions were represented to foster an atmosphere of cooperation and resource sharing rather than concentrating power and control within one or two SOs. The 13 SOs ranged in focus from grantmaking, to training, to policy analysis, to networking and information-sharing, and provided services throughout Bulgaria.

ISC used participatory, flexible, and client-driven strategies within a framework of performance-based monitoring to ensure the success of the project. SOs were fully engaged in designing and implementing the project, leading to greater ownership of and increased responsibility for its outcome and the quality of service provided to beneficiaries. Ongoing performance-based monitoring allowed ISC to strategically intervene as needed to address program weaknesses or provide assistance to SOs.

ISC designed the DemNet program to address two interconnected, but separate, issues. ISC **strengthened the capacity of SO partners** by asking them to self-evaluate and identify the areas in which they needed to build organizational competency. In turn, the SOs, with ISC support and guidance, **strengthened the capacity of the NGO sector** through targeted programs that supported a broad spectrum of activities, including citizen advocacy, training, networking, grantmaking, resource mobilization, and policy analysis in four targeted areas of environmental protection, democracy building, social safety net improvement, and economic development.

STRATEGIES

ISC employed a number of strategies to build a vibrant network of SOs throughout Bulgaria:

- **Organizational Assessment.** ISC began its work with the SOs with an initial self assessment that allowed each SO to evaluate its own internal organizational issues and create a tailored organizational strengthening plan.
- **Performance-Based Monitoring.** Using a Service Quality Review and an International Standard Audit, ISC helped SOs measure progress towards their goals while establishing systems for reporting to donors and constituents.
- **Networking and Partnership Building.** ISC convened regular meetings and events and provided extensive trainings for SOs to support the development of an SO network, including such topics as public outreach and media, joint fundraising, research application, advocacy, and coordinated grantmaking.
- **Stimulating Local Resource Mobilization.** Through workshops and technical assistance, seminars that convened experts on income generation and government contracts, a study that examined the culture of philanthropy in Bulgaria, and a national conference on volunteerism, ISC helped SOs develop alternative funding sources to help sustain them at the program's close.

IMPACTS

As a result of DemNet II, the SO partners had targeted their services more directly to the needs of the NGO sector, improved their ability to attract funding and mobilize local resources, and strengthened governance and planning approaches. Improvements in the functional areas of the SOs include:

- Grantmakers have significantly strengthened their credibility through more open and transparent practices that effectively and fairly support NGOs.
- Policy analysis SOs share research more broadly with other NGOs and the public, fostering a better environment for effective advocacy and citizen engagement.
- Training organizations provide more sophisticated, targeted training that responds to the current needs of the NGO sector.
- Networking and information-sharing SOs have dramatically improved their outreach to help raise public awareness of the good work NGOs are doing and encourage joint activities among the NGO, government, and private sectors.

Through both phases of the Democracy Network program, ISC has built a solid foundation of NGOs and support organizations with strong skills in advocacy, citizen participation, public outreach, and networking to work together with the government and business sectors in addressing Bulgaria's economic, environmental, and social challenges.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the course of DemNet II, SO partners continued to provide valuable programming to the NGO sector even as they strengthened their internal capacity. SO partners funded 253 projects and provided a range of technical services to the sector. Some notable achievements of the SOs and their NGO partners include:

- **Passing an NGO law in 2000.** Previously, NGOs lacked a clear legal status, and operated under a provision of the 1949 law on the basic Person and Family Act. The new law had been in the works for many years, and the coalition formed by the SOs and the NGOs under DemNet auspices was instrumental in its passage. The NGO law clarifies the legal basis for NGO formation and operation, and provides clear expectations about their activities and performance, serving to increase credibility.
- **Forming an extensive network of small NGOs in northeastern Bulgaria.** To build the capacity of small NGOs in more than 70 towns and villages, the Open Society Club-Varna established a formalized network to provide training and technical assistance and a forum where NGOs could share information and resources. Because of this network, 75 percent of the NGOs involved were able to raise funds from new international and national donors.

- **Increasing advocacy skills.** The Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS) provided a series of trainings to strengthen the skills of NGO leaders already engaged in advocacy activities. This led to the creation of an advocacy network of more than 20 NGOs and grassroots organizations that has, among other initiatives, developed an amendment to the National Law for the Protection, Rehabilitation, and Social Integration of the Handicapped.
- **Influencing national legislation.** The TIME EcoProjects Foundation built and maintained a coalition of environmental NGOs that successfully influenced the development of the Biodiversity law in conjunction with government representatives, despite longstanding tension between the two sectors. Another SO, the Center for Economic Development Foundation, effectively lobbied for policy changes on small and medium enterprises and competitiveness, tax policy, economic growth, and the pension system in Bulgaria.
- **Demonstrating active citizen engagement at the local level.** The DemNet activity in the Kardjali region built new community strengthening capacity in the NGO Resource Center-Kardjali and stimulated a long-term commitment by three communities to citizen participation in problem-solving.

Although the economic environment in Bulgaria has not improved as much as international observers had hoped, the SOs participating in DemNet II have demonstrated a greatly improved ability to serve their NGO constituents and seek out new resources, even as international funding declines. Through both phases of the Democracy Network program, ISC has built a solid foundation of NGOs and support organizations with strong skills in advocacy, citizen participation, public outreach, and networking to work together with the government and business sectors in addressing Bulgaria's economic, environmental, and social challenges. Today in Bulgaria, with a stronger and healthier NGO sector in place, citizens have reliable and trusted vehicles to represent their concerns and advocate for change to create a better future for themselves and their communities.

II. The Context

Between 1995 and 1998, during an extremely difficult period of transition in the country, the Institute for Sustainable Communities implemented the first phase of the Democracy Network (DemNet I) program in Bulgaria. Inflation was running at 600 percent, more than 40 percent of the workforce was unemployed, and government retrenchment had stopped many of the democratic reforms initiated in the early 1990s. The government was indifferent, if not hostile, to the NGO sector, and the economic crisis meant that few resources were available locally to support the civil society work that was needed.

In this environment, ISC provided much needed training, technical assistance, encouragement, and financial support to more than 120 NGOs in Bulgaria, which in turn delivered programs and carried out projects to support social services, improved governance, healthy local economies, and environmental protection. At the conclusion of DemNet I, ISC was able to demonstrate: 1) an increase in the number of NGOs working on public policy issues; 2) an increase in the number of NGOs using public outreach mechanisms; 3) more than 60 partnerships among NGOs, local governments, businesses, and the media; and 4) more than 50 cases of NGO-initiated policy changes, including laws affecting the election process, the environment, worker safety, child protection, and social assistance. With this base of increased capacity in the NGO sector, and with changes in the external environment that favored more rapid reform, USAID planned the next level of activity.

USAID conceived the second phase of the Democracy Network (DemNet II) program during a period of cautious optimism for Bulgaria. A new government had been elected on a platform of democratic and economic reform and promised more openness and interaction with NGOs. Reform throughout the region appeared to be taking hold. USAID was looking at indicators and timetables for its departure in a number of countries in the region. As part of its exit strategy planning, actions were underway for USAID, in cooperation with several private foundations, to establish a regional Trust for Civil Society that would fund NGO activities in a number of Central European and Balkan nations, including Bulgaria, once U.S. bilateral aid concluded.

There were also major national and international forces at work that played a role in setting the stage for DemNet II. As ISC began the program in late 1998, Bulgaria had initiated steps to join NATO, and had approved the National Plan for European Accession. The plan to join the European Union also meant that the Bulgarian Government had made a commitment to working closely with NGOs to meet the criteria for accession that required Bulgaria to make substantive progress in democracy strengthening and promoting the rule of law as well as in protecting human rights and minorities.

What was not anticipated as DemNet II was launched was massive disruption in the states of the former Yugoslavia and the war in Kosovo, both of which affected the entire region. Economic reform slowed as Bulgaria lost access to European trade routes. Regional conflict, another change in the Bulgarian Government, and donor disillusionment with the pace of economic and democratic reform in the country all became part of the context under which ISC was operating. Ultimately USAID was not able to participate in the Trust for Civil Society. The trust that was eventually created is significantly smaller in scope and was much slower in its start up; however, it is beginning to initiate contacts in Bulgaria.

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III. Program Design & Goals

DemNet II focused on key organizations in Bulgaria that could provide ongoing support to NGOs when the major bilateral funding provided by USAID and others was gone.

The design of the second phase of the Democracy Network program focused on key organizations in Bulgaria that could provide ongoing support to NGOs when the major bilateral funding provided by USAID and others was gone. To address the specific USAID strategic objective of “Increased, better-informed citizen participation in public policy decision-making,” DemNet II’s strategy was to develop the capacity of support organizations (SOs) that would offer services and programs needed by the nonprofit civil society sector so that NGOs could, in turn, more effectively address issues of public concern. SOs would therefore serve NGOs by providing grants, training, technical assistance, and policy analysis, offering both a nexus for networking and cooperation to help achieve their potential and a way for the public to exert greater influence upon both government policy and NGO programming.

ISC recognized that the DemNet program results and impact needed to be realized on two connected but separate levels:

- **Strengthening Targeted SO Partners** so they would be capable of attracting and using the resources required to provide services and support to others. ISC targeted the stakeholders themselves—the SOs—to help identify the areas where they needed to build organizational competency, and determine and undertake the necessary steps to effect organizational change. Learning, in this case, occurred according to the individual needs of the organizations, their capacity to absorb and use information, and their creativity and receptivity. At the same time that they were undertaking their own organizational strengthening, the SOs needed to offer a diversity of high quality services to NGOs.

- **Supporting a Vibrant NGO Sector** through targeted programs that were implemented by the SOs designed to support a broad spectrum of activities (e.g., advocacy, training, grantmaking, resource mobilization, and policy analysis) in four priority development areas—environment protection, democracy building, social safety net improvement, and economic development. This decentralized support coming from regional and national support organizations was offered to a variety of NGOs widely distributing the benefits to the overall population.

ISC designed strategies to target a cluster of issues impeding SOs from developing as strong resources for the larger NGO sector, including:

- inadequate professional skills and organizational competence that made it difficult for SOs to successfully manage complex projects;
- a lack of experience in constituency building and responsiveness to beneficiaries;
- a competitive funding environment that hindered effective cooperation among NGOs;
- reliance on project funding by foreign donors; and
- an underdeveloped philanthropic culture.

To address these issues, ISC employed several strategies:

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING

The aim of organizational strengthening was to foster SOs that could demonstrate capacity in: democratic governance; client orientation for the provision of services to NGOs; unbiased, nonpartisan provision of services; effective program management; public accountability and transparency; financial management; monitoring and reporting; mobilizing alternative sources of funding; and sharing information with other SOs and donors. The tools employed included organizational self-assessments, and targeted training and technical assistance. ISC assisted each SO in articulating a vision for how it wanted to evolve as an institution, and then to develop a plan for institutional improvement, utilizing DemNet resources, their own resources, and outside resources.

PERFORMANCE-BASED MONITORING

Monitoring provided essential feedback to ISC on overall SO performance in all of the above-mentioned areas, and allowed ISC to intervene as necessary to assist SOs in making improvements to their management and program implementation. It was also a means to ensure that services going to the NGO sector were responsive to client demands and addressing needs with efficiency and effectiveness. In addition to traditional reporting and site visits, ISC employed an international standard audit and service quality review to address both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of monitoring.

NETWORKING & PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

Creating connections and developing effective networks among NGOs with local, regional, and central governments and within each community are means for expanding resources to address and solve problems. It is also essential to building advocacy capacity and sustaining commitment toward achieving long-term goals. Beginning first with its own SO partners, ISC worked with SOs to change the climate of mistrust and negative competition among NGOs by identifying issues of common interest, sharing lessons learned, and building personal relationships. ISC provided opportunities for collaboration as well as the necessary tools and skills that engender effective networking and coalition building.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

ISC's aim was to assist SO partners in developing a broader base of funding for their organizations that included effective donor development, contracting and fees for services, constituency-based fundraising, and in-kind support through volunteers and services. A variety of program activities and tools, including targeted training and technical assistance, networking, and assessments of current conditions, were used to develop these capacities.

Two guiding principles informed all the strategies ISC employed in DemNet II:

Stakeholder Participation. Insofar as possible, the entire DemNet process was *participatory*—SO partners were the owners of their programs. They identified NGO constituent needs and each designed a program to address those needs. Each assessed its organizational competency and developed and implemented a strategy for its strengthening. Monitoring activities implemented by ISC involved the SOs as active participants.

Local Capacity Building. ISC's commitment in DemNet was to ensure that the end result of all its activities strengthened *local capacity* whether in the hands of the support organizations themselves, with other NGOs, or with the numerous local consultants it utilized in implementing DemNet II. Using local consultants to work with SOs at all stages of the program was a hallmark of the DemNet program. The number of overseas consultants was limited and those brought in by ISC were required to develop a local team to implement the activity. The strategy required selecting consultants who were willing to coach as well as produce deliverables. The result of this strategy meant that local consulting capacity was strengthened in the process and the skills were retained in Bulgaria.

IV. Strengthening the Capacity of SO Partners

Over the course of DemNet II, ISC gave SO partners a total of \$2,758,319 in grants to provide direct programming to the NGO sector through grantmaking, training and technical assistance, networking and information sharing, and policy analysis. SO partner grantmakers made \$1,011,874 in subgrants to NGOs. Without the SO organizational development, much of this activity would not have been possible. The ability that the SOs demonstrated for making grants, managing finances, providing training, and helping the NGO sector be more effective overall is a direct result of their improved capacity.

ISC was able to build SO capacity through a careful partner selection process, tailored organizational strengthening, and performance-based monitoring. In addition, ISC looked for and facilitated opportunities to deepen the program's impact through networking and partnerships, resource mobilization, and demonstrating citizen participation in a pilot initiative. These combined approaches significantly strengthened the 13 SO partners, making them role models for the entire sector. The SO partners also improved specific skills and approaches unique to them as grantmakers, trainers, think tanks, and information and networking organizations.

SELECTING SUPPORT ORGANIZATION PARTNERS

The selection of SO partners was an intensive and sometimes politically charged process. The NGO community in Bulgaria recognized that those organizations selected as DemNet SO partners would have a three-year base of funding for specific program implementation, the potential to strengthen their organizations through targeted grants, and training and technical assistance. For these reasons, a transparent selection process took on heightened importance in the early days of the project. ISC addressed this through a consultative process involving questionnaires, focus groups, discussions with both NGOs and leadership throughout the country, and identifying a

program committee comprising representatives from the sector and charged with guiding the selection process and the overall DemNet program. While these approaches presented challenges, there were achievements that contributed to the success of the program over the long term. These include:

- The areas of emphasis for SO partner selection (grants, training and technical assistance, information sharing and networking, policy analysis) were based on the feedback from the consultative process. The selection criteria and request for applications for support organizations were developed not only by ISC but in collaboration with the program committee, making it broad based and reflective of the standards and values to which people in the sector aspired.
- The entire selection process was transparent. Both positive and negative publicity, while often difficult at the time, was dealt with openly. This helped build trust over the long term among others not selected to be SO partners and within the donor community.
- Even critics of DemNet acknowledged that they were, in fact, consulted and saw their interests and concerns reflected in the design of the program and selection process.

ISC created a matrix of program priorities to ensure that all program requirements would be addressed in the SO selection process. It included:

- **Functional needs** for the sector—grantmaking, policy analysis, training, and information sharing and networking;
- **Sectoral priorities** identified by USAID for the project—environmental protection, democracy building, economic development and social safety network improvement;
- **Geographic diversity**—developing viable support organizations outside the Sofia nexus;
- **Target groups**—underserved and vulnerable populations; and
- **Innovative problem solving**—addressing needs with new approaches and in partnership with other NGOs, government institutions, and businesses.

ISC was able to build SO capacity through a careful partner selection process, tailored organizational strengthening, and performance-based monitoring.

“The DemNet team understood our desire to carry out the process, and they did everything possible to meet our desire to change the redistribution of activities on the program, depending on the situation.”

*Resource Center
Foundation*

ISC sought organizations with a strong track record and evidence of quality performance. Key selection criteria for SOs included program competency in the functional and sectoral areas, existing organizational capacity to manage complex projects, and an ability to convene diverse constituencies to achieve program aims.

SO selection was ultimately a balance between program priorities and organizational capabilities. In some cases, it was necessary to adapt the criteria as in the case of selecting SOs from the Kardjali-Haskovo region where the NGO sector was underdeveloped and greater value was placed on regional representation than on organizational capability.

The result was that 13 organizations were selected to be SO partners in three application processes. Initially, 12 organizations were selected; however, within a few months two organizations developed serious problems and had to be dropped from the program. Subsequently, three additional organizations were selected within the next six months, bringing the number to 13.

The SO partners represent a broad cross section of the Bulgarian NGO community and include organizations from Sofia and across the country. They are think tanks, grantmakers, training providers, and information and networking centers that serve environmental interests, effective media relations, economic development, and democratic reform, and strengthen social support systems (see Attachments A and B).

The following SO partners were selected:

- Agency for Regional Development and Business Center in Vidin (ARDBC-Vidin)
- Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation (BCAF)
- Bulgarian Media Coalition (BMC)
- Resource Center Foundation (RCF)
- Center for Economic Development Foundation (CED)
- Center for Social Practices (CSP)
- Democratic Citizenship Coalition (DCC)
- Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS)
- NGO Center-Kardjali
- Open Society Club Rousse (OSC-Rousse)
- Open Society Club Varna (OSC-Varna)
- Regional Agency for Social and Economic Development (RASED-Haskovo)
- TIME EcoProjects Foundation (TIME)

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING

The ability to absorb and embrace new approaches to their work and seek and respond to technical assistance are characteristics of sustainable organizations. ISC provided a framework for SOs to assess their organizations, identify their needs, and undertake actions to strengthen their capacity and performance. Readiness to engage and participate in organizational development and monitoring varied with each SO partner. Those that fully tapped the DemNet resources achieved more of their stated goals.

ISC's original program design called for the organizational strengthening of SOs as the first phase, followed by their implementation of support services. During the start of the project, it became apparent that this sequencing of activities would create a gap in direct support to the sector, particularly that of small grants. To address this, the program was changed so that SOs would receive support to implement their programs while simultaneously undertaking organizational strengthening activities. Although this change placed a great deal of initial pressure on the partners, it provided for much needed direct support to the sector, demonstrated the level of SO capacity to provide services, and enabled ISC to build trust with them. The latter two were particularly important for establishing a basis for subsequent organizational strengthening interventions.

Organizational Assessment Process

ISC required that each SO partner undertake a participatory organizational self assessment. This approach gave participants control and power over process and outcomes. Initially, the majority of organizations had a difficult time adapting to this approach as they were more accustomed to meeting donor directives attached to funding rather than developing their own plans for improving internal systems. Being challenged to address internal organizational issues meant taking time away from program implementation for SOs with limited human resources. Despite having competed for the opportunity, SOs also resisted what was initially perceived as excessive ISC interference within their organization.

The initial assessment set a baseline for organizational development across multiple dimensions:

- **Oversight and Vision** focused on the role of the board of directors, the relevance of the mission, and the autonomy of the organization vis-à-vis donors and funding sources.
- **Management Resources** included leadership and management style, decisionmaking, strategic planning, and such management systems as personnel, information, service delivery to beneficiaries, constituency participation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Human Resources** focused on adequacy of staff skills, mentoring of staff, and staff development.
- **Financial Resources** included financial management, financial vulnerability (funding diversity and local resource mobilization) and financial sustainability.
- **External Resources** included public relations, constituency orientation, and ability to work with local and central governments, businesses, and other NGOs.

Through a facilitated process that engaged major stakeholders within the organization, the self assessment was scored based on criteria in four stages: start up, developing, expanding/consolidation, and sustaining. The end product of the self assessment was an organizational strengthening plan, or Institutional Development Framework (IDF), submitted to ISC for review and approval in a consultative process with the SO.

The results of the organizational assessment process served to:

- establish a baseline for monitoring SO development;
- initially assess the organizational and service delivery capacity and vulnerabilities of each SO;
- provide a basis for making grants and providing training and technical assistance to SOs; and
- offer training and technical assistance to SO staff and local Bulgarian consultants involved in implementing the organizational strengthening and monitoring components of SO programs.

The mechanism ISC used for organizational assessment was designed by Mark Renzi of Management Systems International. To ensure that the assessment tool was relevant to the Bulgarian situation, ISC invited Renzi to work with a group of Bulgarian organizational development consultants to adapt and refine the tool for Bulgarian organizational use (see Attachment C). These local consultants, trained by Renzi and ISC staff members, became coaches for the SOs in their assessment process and continued in that role throughout the program.

Using local consultants as coaches in the organizational assessment process, rather than ISC staff, was a conscious decision. ISC determined that partners would have a higher comfort level with the process knowing that the ISC staff was not “looking over their shoulders.” ISC also promised confidentiality between the coaches and SO partners. The fact that this confidentiality was maintained throughout the assessment process helped build trust and, as the program evolved, SO partners increasingly came directly to ISC staff for assistance on both organizational and program issues. With time, SO partners increasingly recognized the value of this aspect of the DemNet program, and more importantly, will be able to use this self-assessment tool beyond this project and throughout their development to guide future strategic planning and organizational strengthening efforts.

The Institutional Development Framework (IDF) “was a very useful and innovative tool. The process involved team members and members of the managing board, which gave a real idea what is the current situation of the organization and where to go according to the identified development priorities. The identified development priorities to focus on and the IDF profile were the main components when developing the business plan for the organization for 2001 and 2002. . . . The same methodology we will use in developing our business plan for the year 2003.”

Agency for Regional Development and Business Center-Vidin

Organizational Development Outcomes of the Assessment Process

The greatest organizational development gains by SO partners were made in the areas of financial systems, organizational governance, outreach and public relations, and planning for sustainability.

Improved financial systems represents one of the most significant outcomes of the organizational strengthening process. SOs took advantage of the opportunity to hire consultants to review their financial management procedures, put management systems into place, and purchase software and supporting hardware to help make their systems more efficient and responsive. As described by one SO partner, the Center for Social Practices, “Paper trails have been established, and the financial management system has improved beyond all comparison to the period prior to 2002.”

ISC provided a second round of organizational strengthening grants following the audit and Service Quality Review to give further impetus to improving financial systems. SO partners took advantage of opportunities to correct weaknesses identified in their systems, recognizing that it prepared them to compete for EU grants and to comply with international standard audit requirements being adopted by the Bulgarian Government.

“Thanks to the support that we received from the DemNet program during the first part of the implementation of our plan for institutional strengthening, the coordination and communication among partners improved. A series of coalition meetings were held in which an analysis of the implementation of the project was made, the future assignments were planned, and the possible solutions to eventual difficulties were discussed. We elaborated and accepted internal regulations, which regulate the responsibilities of the partners and the team performing the project.”

Democratic Citizenship Coalition

Increased board participation and strengthening of governance systems was another key outcome of the organizational assessment process as reported by almost all of the 13 SO partners. The organizational self-assessment tool was instrumental in effecting awareness and change on this issue, increasing professionalism and prompting changes in how SO partners selected and worked with their boards, members, and management. For example:

- Using their Institutional Development Framework throughout the course of the program, the Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation (BCAF) carried out six board and staff retreats for self assessment and strategic and operational planning as well as two interim staff self-assessment sessions for reviewing its performance and progress during the program. As a result, BCAF has “become more strategic in its selection process for board members, board members are more actively involved in the program, and the staff is learning how to use the board more effectively.”
- The Resource Center Foundation used organizational development support to improve its management systems, including the preparation by its board of trustees of a strategic plan that sets the guidelines for the foundation's overall development.
- The Open Society Club-Varna, an established organization with a 10-year track record, saw organizational development support as integral to the organization's “renewal—developing a strategic plan for the next three years, a system for recruitment of new members and motivation of old ones, and use of new methods in the club's management.”

SO partners improved their outreach and public relations as a result of organizational strengthening, employing new methods for increasing their effectiveness in this area. For example, BCAF hired consultants to assist them in developing new strategies to both appeal to the private sector and strengthen its overall public relations. Membership in local business associations gave them access to potential contributors for their payroll deduction program as well as possible new board members. The Regional Agency for Social and Economic Development-Haskovo (RASED-Haskovo) trained a communications expert for their staff, who strengthened media relations for the agency and raised its profile in the region.

“Exceptionally important was the KPMG audit in the course of program implementation, which helped improve the financial discipline of the foundation as a whole.”

*Resource Center
Foundation*

“Organizational advice, needs assessment, and evaluation conducted with assistance and funding from DemNet helped the Center for Social Practices (CSP) restructure itself after the loss of personnel while not losing grip on its mission, impact, and style of work. One side result of this was the recovery for CSP of its capacity to attract volunteers, helpers, and independent expertise.”

*Center for Social
Practices*

Strengthened business planning for sustainability represents another successful organizational development initiative embraced by a number of the SO partners. The most ambitious plans were undertaken by RASED-Haskovo, the Agency for Regional Development and Business Center-Vidin (ARDBC-Vidin), and the Open Society Club-Rousse (OSC-Rousse).

For example, OSC-Rousse used organizational strengthening grants to hire a consultant to assist the staff in developing a business plan that included the following revenue generating activities: foreign-language teaching and training; information services; preparation and registration for the standardized tests (TOEFL, SAT, GRE, GMAT) required to apply to universities abroad; and the legalization, notarization, and translation of documents. The profit from these business activities is used to cover the club's administrative costs and supporting projects that meet the objectives of the organization.

Performance-Based Monitoring

An effective program of monitoring and evaluation was crucial to the success of the DemNet program and an essential piece of the entire organizational strengthening process. The monitoring program was designed to:

- ensure that SO partners were meeting their program objectives;
- provide feedback to SO partners on aspects of their program that required attention and strengthening; and
- measure the results and impact of the entire DemNet program.

In addition to traditional forms of monitoring such as program reporting, site visits, partner meetings, and the previously discussed organizational assessments, ISC undertook these monitoring exercises:

- an international standard audit to help SOs strengthen their financial management and reporting systems;
- a Service Quality Review (SQR) to determine how effectively SOs respond to the needs of NGOs and other beneficiaries; and
- a Participatory Assessment of Results and Impact (PARI) to focus on how well the NGOs achieved their goals.

International Standard Audit

ISC carefully made the decision to require an international standard audit for all SOs, believing that the audit and the resulting recommendations would provide a basis for helping SOs strengthen their financial management and reporting systems. With a successful audit, SO partners would build credibility before their beneficiaries and prospective donors. Requiring an audit supported the overall organizational strengthening process. The initial response was not enthusiastic among the SOs as they judged it to be the most intrusive of ISC's interventions.

Unlike the rest of the program, the audit did not allow for participation in design and implementation, and it required that the SO partners submit their books and systems to an independent body. From the perspective of the partners, the risks were high. While most SOs had undergone independent financial reviews, only one, the Center for Economic Development Foundation (CED), was experienced in the independent audit process. For this reason, ISC subcontracted with CED to develop a training program on audit preparation, and all SO partners participated in this training. The internationally respected accounting firm of KPMG performed audits of all 13 SO partners.

Organizational Development Outcomes of the International Standard Audit

The most important tool of the audit was the management report. In feedback sessions with each SO partner, ISC reviewed the findings and made concrete recommendations regarding where changes were needed in financial management systems. Technical assistance from ISC consultants or an organizational strengthening grant was offered to improve their systems, e.g., Open Society Club-Varna purchased new accounting software that would better track its multiple programs while the Center for Social Practices engaged a financial consultant to organize and streamline its systems. In the case of one SO partner, where feedback on the audit required extensive changes that were not undertaken, ISC suspended funding until accounting and reporting practices were brought up to an acceptable standard. Once the audit process was completed and partners had the opportunity to reflect, the consensus was that the process was a significant strengthening tool.

Improved Services and Links to NGOs: Service Quality Review

At the beginning of the DemNet program, the language of **quality service delivery** and **client orientation** was alien to most of the participating SO partners. ISC recognized that sustainable organizations must be responsive to their clients and deliver services that are efficient and effective, and placed high priority on ensuring that these concepts were integrated into their SO partners' approaches. This process of education and integration involved an innovative participatory evaluation tool, the Service Quality Review (SQR).

The SRQ was designed to answer the following questions:

- Is the organization client oriented? Does it know what its clients need/want? Is it meeting those needs?
- Does it think strategically about the future needs of its clients and create a demand for new information?
- Does it have information showing that the project is moving its NGOs in positive directions?
- Does it provide services that are timely and appropriate?
- Are there mechanisms through which NGOs have some role in the SO's operations, including client surveys, feedback, and the participation of NGO representatives in meetings, planning, or evaluation activities?

The SQR was designed and developed by ISC staff and Dr. Shirley Buzzard of Heartlands International. In order to build local capacity, ISC had 10 local consultants with extensive experience with the NGO sector in Bulgaria work under the guidance of Dr. Buzzard. The local consultants submitted their individual reports to the SO in a structured meeting allowing for response from both parties and, in some cases, developing possible strategies to address identified problems.

Confidentiality was essential to the process. Consultants conducted in-depth interviews with the SOs, the NGOs they served, community leaders, and, in the case of grantmakers, unsuccessful applicants. Two assessment tools were used in this process—a strategic thinking quiz and a customer satisfaction survey. Once the field studies were completed, the local consultants were brought together for a two-day assessment in consultation with Dr. Buzzard. Out of this workshop, recommendations were developed for ways in which the SOs could improve (see Attachment D).

Key findings of the report included:

- SOs were credited with stimulating citizen participation. In regions where the SOs worked, many people—including women and minorities who previously were not civically active—were volunteering and “organizing, talking, and collaborating on a wide range of social, environmental, economic, tourism, and ethnic issues.”
- SOs placed greater emphasis on the quantity over quality of services. Trying to do as much as possible with limited resources, the SO partners prematurely expanded programs to meet the needs of a growing number of client NGOs. The review determined that a key area for future improvement was matching SO services with the pace of growth and sophistication of their client NGOs.
- **Grantmaking SOs were perceived as transparent and fair, and capable of leveraging local resources.** Administering subgrants strengthened the SOs and the process of selecting grant recipients and other services was perceived to be transparent and fair. Grant programs were effective in leveraging an estimated 30 percent match through local volunteers, partnerships with local municipalities, and in-kind contributions.
- SO activities outside Sofia helped create “a local NGO community” in the regions where they work, **although more is needed.** SO partners were effective in engaging hundreds of NGOs, yet the review noted there was still an unmet need among local citizens “for more information on how to organize to solve problems, how to leverage funds, and to learn from similar groups in other towns.”
- SOs support strong NGO partnerships with local government. While NGOs do not play a large role in national policy debate, within the regions, SOs increased NGO voices in planning, decisionmaking, and problem solving.
- Principles of participation, transparency, and customer service were modeled and shared. SOs passed on what they were learning in the DemNet program to the NGOs they worked with, thereby raising the professional standards of the sector.
- The financial viability of current SO programs remains uncertain. The review noted that donor funding was decreasing at a faster rate than NGOs could find ways to replace them through fees for services or entrepreneurial activities. Among the SOs, the three policy research organizations appeared most sustainable as they have multiple sources of income. Particularly for organizations based outside of Sofia, attracting funds remains difficult.

The Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation considered its system for giving feedback and consultations to unsuccessful applicants—adopted following the SQR—an important step in serving their constituencies. “Even though there were some difficult cases, we consider this as an important asset of the program as we could reach a larger group of the applying organizations and offer them the opportunity to amend and improve their proposals, and seek new funding options.”

Organizational Development Outcomes of the Service Quality Review

The SO partners took action to address issues identified through the SQR, resulting in improved service, particularly among grantmakers. For example, both the Open Society Club-Rousse (OSC-Rousse) and the Bulgaria Charities Aid Foundation determined that they provided insufficient support to applicants that did not receive grants. In response, they initiated consultations with applicants whose projects were refused. OSC-Rousse staff worked with NGOs to identify weaknesses in their applications and assist them in improving their proposal development process. It also strengthened its ongoing assistance to grantees by providing training on budgeting and donor reporting, project implementation, logic modeling, and project financial management.

SOs providing training found that SQR feedback improved their ability to design, deliver, and target training. The Bulgarian Media Coalition reported that recommendations led to “more interactive, comprehensive, and practically oriented modules; improved feedback form; and enhanced sources for data collecting.” As a result of the feedback, TIME EcoProjects Foundation saw its training capacity “substantially improved.”

Participatory Analysis of Results & Impact

One of the recommendations of the SQR was that toward the end of the program, ISC should undertake a training and technical assistance initiative around monitoring results and documenting impact. The SQR noted that SOs and their NGO partners needed these skills and information to attract continued funding.

The ISC staff implemented the recommendation, initiating an innovative monitoring and evaluation tool—Participatory Analysis of Results and Impact (PARI). The PARI evaluation was a joint effort among ISC, the SO partners, and their assisted NGOs. The PARI team was composed of ISC staff members, seven independent consultants who were experts in monitoring and evaluation, and representatives from each SO. The assessment measured the results, achievements, and impact of individual projects implemented by the NGOs supported through the SO programs, and the DemNet program as a whole. The entire process was framed by the principle of stakeholder inclusion at every stage of implementation. The results are further summarized in Section VI.

DEEPENING PROGRAM IMPACT

In addition to the organizational development activities and outcomes described above, ISC worked to strengthen the SO partners through networking and partnership, resource mobilization, and demonstrating citizen engagement at the local level. These activities substantively deepened the program's impact as described below.

Networking & Partnership

Creating connections and networking is an important aspect of the overall DemNet program strategy. To support the development of an SO network, ISC convened regular events and meetings where the staff from the participating organizations could develop the personal relationships and trust needed to share information and increase the likelihood of collaboration. Networking among SO partners and in the broader community produced a number of positive outcomes, including these select examples:

- **Joint Fundraising.** As a result of relations established during SO partner meetings, the Regional Agency for Social and Economic Development in Haskovo and NGO Center-Kardjali were successful in applying for a PHARE Access grant to serve their regions.
- **Research Application.** The Open Society Club-Varna and the NGO Center-Kardjali used research by the Center for Social Practices on regional civil society dynamics in Bulgaria in their NGO needs-assessment process.

- **Advocacy Training.** The Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS) provided advocacy training for the Agency for Regional Development and Business Center in Vidin and Creating Grassroots Alternatives, a Roma-targeted support organization.
- **Coordinated Grantmaking.** Grantmakers worked together to ensure effective national coverage and timing of grant rounds. All used SO partners as experts on their review panels. Grantmakers also shared practices as they worked for common standards in grantmaking.
- **Public Outreach and Media Training.** The Bulgarian Media Coalition supported a number of other SO partners in addressing their specific program aims or working with their beneficiaries.

Stimulating Local Resource Mobilization

Developing the capacity of SOs to mobilize local financial and human resources is another key element of the program because of its importance to sustainability. The common constraints to effective resource mobilization in transitional societies include lack of fundraising skills, underdeveloped culture for philanthropy and volunteerism, lack of results data and documentation that might attract new donors, and inexperience with fee-for-services activities. In Bulgaria, these constraints were compounded by the absence of laws that encourage philanthropy and a national economy that remains fragile, thus affecting the possibility of private sector contributions as well as for contracting with the private sector and government institutions.

ISC worked with its SO partners through training, research, and targeted incentives to strengthen their local base of support through fundraising, recruitment of volunteers, public relations, and information sharing as summarized below:

- **Workshops and Targeted Technical Assistance.** ISC sponsored two intensive workshops for SO partners and other Bulgarian SOs on Resource Mobilization and Sustainability Planning. The consultants followed up the training with personal consultations as requested. ISC also gave direct assistance through organizational strengthening grants that supported consultants in fundraising, fees for services, business planning, and volunteer development.
- **Linking with the Private and Public Sectors.** DemNet's Policy to Action seminars engaged SO partners with experts and practitioners who provided guidance and

experience on income-generation activities and—once the new NGO Law was passed—with representatives of government institutions to offer guidance to NGOs on opportunities and strategies for providing contracted services. ISC also organized a roundtable discussion that brought together representatives of the private sector and the international donor community to inform the SO partners of what businesses looked for when they contracted and/or established philanthropic partnerships with NGOs.

- **Understanding the State of Philanthropy.** ISC contracted with Vitosha Research to undertake a study of the culture of philanthropy in Bulgaria. As part of that study, researchers identified successful cases and practices. The findings were discussed with SO partners and broadly distributed throughout the sector (see Attachment E).
- **Volunteerism.** ISC, along with UNDP and the National Alliance for Volunteers, sponsored the first national conference on volunteerism in Bulgaria. An outcome of the conference was a national policy guideline for volunteerism and the establishment of a volunteer resource center.

In addition to what is noted above, examples of the most significant outcomes of these activities include:

Creating a Positive Legal Environment

ISC worked with and through its partners for the successful passage in 2000 of a new law clarifying the status and governing the activities of NGOs in Bulgaria. The law allows for, among other measures, business activity for NGOs. DemNet supported SO partners working on these issues through two umbrella grants to lobby for passage of the NGO law and provide training on compliance with the new law after it was enacted.

The Resource Center Foundation brought together an expert team in partnership with the Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation, Center for the Study of Democracy, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, and the Open Society Foundation and drafted proposals on changes in taxation concerning the activities of Not-for-Profit Legal Entities (NPLEs). Debates were initiated with representatives of the administration at the Council of Ministers, the President's Office, Parliament's Committee on Legal Matters, and the Civil Society Committee, and held with the Ministry of Finance and the International Monetary Fund. The purpose was to promote an improved tax

environment, create adequate economic levers to encourage NPLEs' pursuit of public-benefit activities, and attracting foreign and local investments. Advocacy for changes in tax legislation continues.

Developing Local Resources

Cost sharing was required in all of the programs proposed by the SO partners to encourage the development of local resources. Grantmakers also adopted cost sharing as part of their requirements. The SOs and NGOs involved in the DemNet program also worked to leverage a variety of resources for their projects. Other examples include:

- the Open Society Club-Varna instituted a local match for grantees from the Varna and Dobrich regions.
- the Regional Agency for Social and Economic Development in Haskovo, the Agency for Regional Development and Business Center in Vidin, the Bulgarian Media Coalition, TIME EcoProjects Foundation, the Resource Center Foundation, and the Democratic Citizen Coalition initiated fees for selected services.
- the TIME EcoProjects Foundation included a local participation requirement in its grants.
- the Center for Social Practices and the Open Society Club-Varna each worked successfully to increase their volunteer base.
- the Open Society Clubs in Rousse and Varna, in complementary activities funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation and DemNet, supported broad-based local fundraising campaigns to address locally identified problems.

Demonstrating Citizen Engagement at the Local Level

As noted above, ISC sought geographic diversity in the SO partner selection, which meant working in the Kardjali region known for its relatively weak NGO sector. The NGO Center-Kardjali proved to be a hardworking SO partner and ISC recognized an opportunity to expand the center's

capacity to serve the region and stimulate citizen participation through ISC's ENGAGE community action project. ENGAGE is a 6-12 month community-planning process designed by ISC to stimulate citizen participation in communities with little positive experience in cooperation on issues of common concern. Given the low level of civic engagement in the Kardjali region, ISC managed the ENGAGE process in partnership with the NGO Center-Kardjali. Although the NGO Center had primary responsibility for program implementation within the broader NGO sector, ISC provided targeted assistance to further develop SO and NGO-sector capacity.

ENGAGE was implemented in the geographically isolated and ethnically diverse region of Kardjali in three municipalities—Kirkovo, Ardino, and Kardjali. ISC's partnership with the NGO Center was crucial to success as the center's experience and position of trust in the region was essential to successful introduction of the project, which met with initial skepticism.

The initiative called for citizen meetings to identify community priorities and then to design and implement projects that address these priorities. Each municipality received a \$15,000 grant from ISC to implement projects that maximized citizen participation and communication, local resource mobilization, and recognized results in a community celebration (see Attachment F).

One of the most powerful elements of the ENGAGE project was that it occurred in an ethnically diverse region of the country, and yet the different ethnic and religious groups came together to pursue common goals. Eight community action projects were implemented as a result of ENGAGE, with tangible results that offered direct improvements in the quality of life for several villages. A hospital purchased new diagnostic equipment, a sports hall was renovated, and new computers were purchased to provide computer training to the schools and the public. Beyond these tangible improvements, a process of diversified public input into community action and decisionmaking was successfully demonstrated. This has had a tremendous impact in creating a positive attitude toward the possible achievements of focused civic action (see Attachment G). As noted in the final report filed by the NGO Center in Kardjali:

One of the most powerful elements of the ENGAGE project was that it occurred in an ethnically diverse region of the country, and yet the different ethnic and religious groups came together to pursue common goals.

Every outcome of this project was valuable for our backward region. The public awareness and public outreach campaigns in the three municipalities reached many and different people, some of them had never been asked for an opinion. People were glad to discuss community problems and to give ideas for solving them, and also were interested in the democratic process of setting the priorities.

The open and transparent process of the ENGAGE project made people believe in the initiative and “light the fire” of a serious engagement and responsibility toward community needs. People and institutions became partners in favor of one goal—to improve the community well being.

But the most valuable impact of the project is the awakened and increased potential of the three municipalities. The good will dialog and actions among diverse people from the communities, and the local and governmental authorities, demonstrated that through active citizen engagement, solutions can be found to improve the community's well being. People believe now that when they work together, they can solve their common problems. This was reflected in every aspect of the lifestyle of the people involved in ENGAGE. It changed the way of thinking that the government is the only responsible entity to deliver programs for us. We are the people who can decide needs and try to solve our common problems together. This brought more awareness and responsibility toward community needs and also increased confidence that things can become better with the joint efforts of the community.

After completing the ENGAGE process, members of the NGO Center-Kardjali staff and community leaders came together to consolidate and institutionalize the approach for long-term impact. Community development organizations have filed for formal recognition in the communities of Ardino and Kardjali to continue subsequent rounds of community planning and implementation. Several individuals from these groups participated in ISC's National Conference on Community Development, contributed to the manual on community action planning, and agreed to participate in the ISC

Community Action Partnership Workshop in Varna in June 2003, where next steps will be developed to involve the SO partners in a broader partnership network of community action service providers.

KEY OUTCOMES IN DEMNET'S FUNCTIONAL AREAS

The primary aim of DemNet II was to build and strengthen indigenous capacity to design, seek support for, and implement programs needed by the NGO sector, while leaving behind organizations that can function without a donor intermediary.

During the initial selection process, ISC found that the functional areas addressed by the program—grantmaking, policy analysis, training and technical assistance, and information sharing and networking—were underdeveloped in the sector. While the selected support organizations represented the strongest and most effective with sufficient experience in their service areas, for the most part, their development was uneven, project driven, and disconnected from their constituencies.

More specifically, the following types of challenges were common across the sector:

- Grantmakers had provided limited funding for special activities, and operated mainly under the direction of donors who approved projects and controlled their overall management.
- Policy analysts and think tanks had credible research experience, but did not engage constituencies in their research process by having them check or test findings, or by reporting back to them. As a result, their work did not effectively advocate for policy change. Research findings were too frequently provided only to the donors that contracted it or to identified government institutions that the think tank wished to influence.
- While the training organizations were active at a basic level, competent process trainers frequently lacked deeper, more advanced content that would help the NGO sector reach new levels of development.
- Negative competition had largely prevented the coalition building and cross fertilization of ideas promoted by information sharing and networking organizations.

As part of the SO Strengthening program component, ISC first instituted a number of standards and requirements for addressing these common functional weaknesses. For example, ISC required that grantmakers submit for approval a detailed plan for grantmaking from announce-

ment through final reporting, including a plan for grants monitoring. Think tanks were required to identify constituencies, test their findings, and provide and receive feedback on their research. Trainers were given the opportunity to strengthen training skills based on an initial needs assessment. Networking organizations targeted their audiences and provided multiple entry points for engagement with constituencies.

As a result of these and the other previously discussed systematic interventions, the SO partners had addressed a wide range of weaknesses by the program's conclusion, and are therefore better positioned to play the role envisioned by USAID after its departure. With increased capabilities and higher standards for conduct, the SOs have reached a higher level of professionalism.

Grantmaking

By the conclusion of DemNet, SO partners had funded 253 projects and could manage a complex grant program from start up to final reporting. They can document a transparent process that includes announcement, selection criteria, feedback and technical assistance to unsuccessful candidates, project monitoring and evaluation, and project reporting. By appointing external expert committees to review applications, they have significantly strengthened the application process.

SO partners now conduct needs assessments to determine priorities in the NGO sector, geographic coverage, and the capacity of NGOs to implement projects. Improved project monitoring and technical help provide better support to grantees throughout the life of the project.

To help increase impact and longevity, grantmakers have designed programs that build local support through an increased volunteer base and matching-funds requirement. As noted, grantmakers are cooperating with one another in announcing grant rounds and by serving on expert committees for selection.

Policy Analysis

The SOs partners providing policy analysis—or think tanks—have broadened their orientation to better serve all of their constituent groups. They more effectively involve their constituents through electronic networks, focus groups, and seminars to present their findings, gather feedback, and publicly disseminate research information. In addition, the policy analysis SOs have improved their relationships with other NGOs by

developing and field-testing advocacy models for NGOs, training them to use the model, and providing ongoing consultations during project implementation.

Training

SO partner trainers improved their services by working from initial needs assessments and reframing trainings based upon user feedback. DemNet also strengthened trainers' knowledge in the selected areas of public relations, media relations, monitoring and evaluation, and logic modeling. By participating in ISC training activities and collaborating on ISC events such as conferences on resource mobilization and community action planning, the SO trainers improved their logistical processes and presentation skills.

ISC identified non-traditional organizations with expertise needed by other organizations. The Bulgarian Media Coalition offered training on media and public relations, while the Agency for Regional Development and Business Center had experience with program design and implementation—a capacity that was lacking among NGOs in northwest Bulgaria.

Networking & Information Sharing

By the conclusion of DemNet, networking and information-sharing SOs had improved information sharing among themselves, expanded print material distribution by using fellow SO partner resources, institutionalized electronic networks that allowed for feedback from their constituencies, and improved their capacity to use all forms of media as an effective informational tool to raise public awareness and inform NGOs of available resources. The SO partners also helped the Ministry of Justice establish a national central registry for NGOs that is available to the public.

Evidence of the strengthened capacity of SO partners was seen early in the program. Responses from the Service Quality Review and Participatory Analysis of Results and Impact particularly noted the quality of support of SO grantmakers, and the increase in the amount and quality of information to the NGO sector. By the conclusion of the program, DemNet SO partners had set a new standard for performance in the sector in this regard. In the coming years, ISC expects that, as the NGO sector develops and requires stronger services and more effective delivery mechanisms from SOs, the support organizations will respond by increasing their own performance standards.

V. SO Partner Performance Stories

ADVOCACY TRAINING • IRIS

Building Capacity through Partnerships

Throughout all of its programs, ISC builds local capacity wherever possible that will sustain communities long after a given project has ended. Under the DemNet program, the Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS) developed a strong training course in advocacy that will continue to serve the NGO sector and stimulate coalition building in the years to come.

With DemNet support, IRIS developed a remarkable pilot program in advocacy based upon Bulgarian experience that targeted the campaigns of nine NGOs. During mid-term project discussions, ISC, IRIS, and USAID recognized a need to expand competence in advocacy into the broader NGO sector and ensure a core of advocacy practitioners with theory, technical, and advocacy experience.

Early in its own program implementation, IRIS acknowledged that its advocacy staff would benefit from work with advocacy experts outside Bulgaria to broaden its theoretical knowledge and improve technical skills. To support IRIS' development, ISC contracted with David Cohen, director of the Advocacy Institute in Washington, D.C., to come to Bulgaria and lead a needs assessment that would examine existing programs in advocacy and indigenous capacity and identify gaps that ISC might address. The IRIS staff was part of the core assessment team and worked with Cohen throughout the process. ISC also arranged for him to spend additional time with IRIS staff members, discussing and advising them in their work.

The needs assessment resulted in a recommendation that ISC develop a course in advocacy for NGO leaders that would develop advocacy trainers and practitioners who could assist in long-term advocacy capacity building in Bulgaria. Staff from ISC and IRIS went to the United States to work with an experienced advocacy trainer, Valerie Miller, to develop the course. During their visit to the U.S., the ISC and IRIS staff also had the opportunity to meet with advocacy leaders and see other programs in action.

A four-module curriculum was developed, adapted to Bulgarian conditions, and translated into Bulgarian. The program was managed and conducted by the four-member ISC/IRIS team with selected external consultants. IRIS staff members were well versed in advocacy content,

but had little experience in training methodologies and participatory learning techniques. ISC worked with the IRIS team to strengthen these skills. The resulting program has trained 20 NGO advocacy leaders and will be offered in the future as needed by the NGO sector.

By the conclusion of the advocacy program, the IRIS trainers had enhanced their theoretical knowledge and technical skills and strengthened their training and communications competencies. In its final program report to ISC, IRIS cites the opportunity to participate in the advocacy needs assessment and participation in the advocacy curriculum development and training program as important organizational strengthening assistance (see Attachments H and I).

NGO-JOURNALIST MEDIA TRAINING • BMC

Building Capacity through Monitoring & Effective Feedback

When the Bulgaria Media Coalition (BMC) was selected to provide training under DemNet, ISC recognized that it was not a traditional training organization. BMC's program did, however, address unmet needs for training in media outreach and public relations in the NGO sector. Furthermore, within its coalition, it had the essential expertise and access to media that was critical to a successful program. ISC believed that in this instance, its content knowledge was more critical than familiarity with training techniques.

ISC's initial assessment of BMC's training for NGOs and journalists found that, while the content presented was of high quality, participants found the experience exhausting. The entirely lecture format made it difficult for participants to absorb the quantity of information offered, little opportunity was given for questions, and the separate sessions for journalists and NGOs were not clearly defined. With feedback from ISC and its consultants, BMC developed effective training skills and the capacity to implement its program on "Professionalizing NGO-Media Relations to Increase Civic Impact Over Public Policy."

In meetings with BMC, ISC staff recommended that the training be broken into segments, instructors use more interactive learning techniques, time be allowed for questions, and a manual be developed to accompany the

training. Additionally, the consultant selected to conduct the Service Quality Review (SQR) for BMC, an experienced trainer, gave advice on interactive techniques and encouraged adapting the organization's evaluation forms to be more effective tools for participant feedback.

The resulting training for NGOs was practically oriented, interactive, and targeted to specific interests of participants. BMC developed a training module directed toward minority NGOs and began to provide individual consultations to NGOs upon request. ISC used one of the BMC trainers in its advocacy module on media.

BMC best states the results of feedback and monitoring in its final report:

One of the things that was constantly changing during the implementation of the project was the training methodology used by BMC. Due to the feedback we received from beneficiaries, as well as the expert support from ISC, we had to constantly adapt the training modules and structure them to the needs of the trainees. As a result, we transformed the seminar design, including more interactive and practically oriented elements. The feedback shows that the new structure of the seminar was more effective and better received among the trainees than the initial one. Another important element that we significantly changed and improved upon during the project was the feedback system, including the questionnaires from the trainees and reports from the local coordinators that tracked the changes after the seminar and analyzed its effectiveness after three to six months.

NGO NETWORKING • OSC-VARNA

Supporting SO Partner Initiatives for Greater Sector Impact

ISC made it a priority in DemNet program management to work with SOs as responsive partners, recognizing them as experts, and based upon their judgment, responding to their recommendations for change. The Open Society Club-Varna's (OSC-Varna's) initial program of grantmaking served the regions of Varna, Dobrich, and Shumen with the aim of creating a network of NGOs in northeast Bulgaria competitive with NGOs in the rest of the country.

OSC-Varna launched its program with a needs assessment and initiated its first grant round.

Following the implementation of the first grant round, OSC-Varna identified two problems it was not addressing under the current program. First, the NGO sector was uneven in its development in the three regions, with Shumen being far behind Varna and Dobrich. As a consequence, proposals from Shumen NGOs were being cut in the proposal-review process. Second, donor funding and support for the NGO sector in a different region, Targovishte, was almost nonexistent, despite the fact that unemployment in the region was the highest in the country and that isolated pockets of ethnically Turkish communities were receiving no attention.

Based upon well-documented evidence and a concrete proposal, ISC approved additional funding to expand the program. OSC-Varna included Targovishte in its regional framework and implemented a segmented program whereby Dobrich and Varna NGOs would apply for grants that required local matches to the grant and Shumen and Targovishte would receive intensive training and support in strategic planning and proposal writing. OSC-Varna also adapted its grant proposal and grantmaking process to allow for small organizations to "break into" the third sector market. Organizations were invited to submit initial proposals describing their needs and proposed activities. After an evaluation by an expert committee, reasonable and original projects were invited to apply with a detailed project. OSC-Varna provided ongoing consultation on proposal writing to assist in the process.

The program changes resulted in skills strengthening for NGOs in Shumen and Targovishte, making them competitive with their NGO colleagues in Varna and Dobrich. As the result of participating in the network, smaller NGOs received support and counsel from more experienced ones and, in some cases, formed working partnerships. Of the grants made by OSC-Varna, 25 percent were awarded to new organizations and reported the successful establishment of a core network of strong and independent organizations and community centers that work in more than 70 towns and villages, with improved services to their respective target groups. Approximately 75 percent of the network members received funding from other Bulgarian and international donor programs, and half gained the necessary experience and confidence to submit proposals to European donors.

VI. Supporting a Vibrant NGO Sector & Strengthening Civil Society in Bulgaria

In assessing the results of the DemNet program, it is important to look both at achievements of the SO partners along with those of the NGOs they assisted through grants, training, information sharing and networking, and policy analysis (see Attachments J and K). The stronger NGO sector increased citizen action substantially on the local, regional, and national levels. A review of some of the results among the NGOs receiving support from the SO partners in DemNet exemplifies this.

TARGETING UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS & IMPROVING SOCIAL SAFETY NETS

As economic and social restructuring caused increased hardship, the absence of state-supported programs had a more negative impact on such marginalized segments of Bulgarian society as minorities and women. These populations were further disadvantaged by the erosion of volunteerism during the communist period when citizens were forced to participate in a number of initiatives.

To offset the absence of government programs and lack of good-will traditions, a number of NGOs focused their resources on assisting those in the community most in need and least able to access alternative sources of support while reviving traditions of community cooperation. Examples of NGO accomplishments supported by the SO partners include:

- In Pleven, an Open Door Center was created to help women who had been battered, abused, or raped. The Pleven municipality granted the center a house for a period of 10 years to be used as *a shelter for women*. In addition to other partners, the local police department now works with the center to provide care and support to women who were previously ignored by their community. The center staff also successfully secured funding from the United Dutch Foundation to repair and furnish the shelter.
- NGO “Friends of the Sea” and the Marine Forces of the Republic of Bulgaria *trained socially disadvantaged children and orphans* as scuba captains and divers to offer them new employment opportunities. One of the graduates is the first scuba diver of Roma origin in the Bulgarian Navy.

- NGO Center-Kardjali initiated a program in Ardino, a predominantly ethnic Turkish community, that *brought together ethnically diverse women* from disparate backgrounds to discuss their problems and participation in the social life of the community. With the support of the NGO Center, the women decided to establish an NGO to continue working collectively on issues of concern to women.
- Working at the local level, the Juridical Council for European Integration initiated a program to provide *pro bono legal assistance to disadvantaged families*. With much of their work in the area of child protection, they are now working for national changes in the Law for Protection of the Child.

CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Given the turmoil that accompanied Bulgaria's transition to a free market economy, challenges abound in the area of promoting economic development. NGOs can be an important engine for creative problem-solving in depressed areas and for generating the public attention and involvement needed to break unproductive patterns. In addition, NGO cultivation of a well-informed and active citizenry can play an important role in combating the harmful effects of corruption. A sample of DemNet programming designed to promote economic opportunity includes the following:

- The NGO Center-Kardjali received a contract from the Financial Ministry, the Ministry of Regional Development, and a consortium group for 57 million leva that *employed 500 jobless people* on the “Strengthening the Riversides of Arda River” project in Kardjali. Also as a result of this collaboration, an office of the Social Ministry was established in Kardjali to share information and consult with NGOs under the PHARE program.
- The Vision Foundation's project, Creating Employment, created seasonal job opportunities by *training women of Turkish origin* living in the Varbitza Pass of the Balkan Mountains to cultivate lavender. Partners in the project include the Varbitza municipality, the local labor council, and “EKO-Todor Todorov” Sole Trader Company.

- In the Village of Tutrakan, *fishermen increased their earning potential* by participating in a course for piloting small boats. The project also provided instruction and support to protect fish-spawning sites along the river.

INCREASING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DIALOGUE

Bulgarian government officials have not traditionally welcomed NGO involvement in official institutions or policy processes, often believing that NGOs sought to usurp the role of government and were driven by questionable motives, leadership, and politics. Many citizens were similarly suspicious of NGO intentions and questioned whether such groups had sufficient links in the communities where they worked. Slowly building trust through transparency and accountability, NGOs have developed committed constituencies within the general citizenry and government and brought together citizens and public servants to better understand one another and achieve shared goals (see Attachments H and I). Following are a few highlights of NGO activities:

- IRIS reported significant progress toward *increased and better informed citizen participation* through a field-tested advocacy model applicable to a wide range of spheres (social justice, ecology, and the protection of ethnic, religious, and cultural rights); and the formation of an advocacy network of more than 20 NGOs and grassroots organizations that can help stimulate advocacy activities throughout Bulgaria.

Results from the network include the establishment of four permanent local Advisory Councils for Social Services; the approval of a proposed amendment to the Local Municipal Ordinance on the Disposal of Solid Domestic Waste; and an amendment to the National Law for the Protection, Rehabilitation, and Social Integration of the Handicapped.

- The Center for Economic Development Foundation initiated successful efforts to *change policies on Small and Medium Enterprises and competitiveness, tax policy and economic growth, and the pension system in Bulgaria*. The center hopes to collaborate with NGOs to strengthen these efforts.
- Roads to Trust Foundation-Haskovo, funded by the Resource Center Foundation, sought assistance from both the Haskovo municipality's departments of Culture and Education and Haskovo school teachers to design an *effective strategy of drug prevention* as part of a "Designing Models of Drug-Prevention Strategies in Working with Young Drug Addicts at the Local Level" project.
- The Charity Association in Stara Zagora, through a program funded by Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation, cooperated with local police to offset the public perception of police as closed and conservative. To *improve relations between the police and the community*, police identification cards were created that introduced individual policemen to residents and provided emergency contact information. On the 'Day of Open Doors,' school children visited the local police, sat in police cars, petted the dogs and horses, and talked with the officers. The police were so pleased with the results that they asked that it be repeated to include the children of officers who often had no idea what their parents did. The project was extended without additional financial support.
- TIME EcoProjects Foundation was successful in *influencing the development of the Biodiversity Law in Bulgaria*. This effort was TIME's longest running initiative, one that carried through the entire DemNet program and required building and maintaining a coalition of environmental NGOs. The resulting law is a joint creation between NGOs and the government that demonstrates that "collaboration between the NGOs and the government is not only possible, but when the right path is found, the final result is beneficial for all stakeholders."

NETWORKING & COALITION BUILDING FOR SUPPORT & SUSTAINABILITY

The capacity to form coalitions, work in partnership with other NGOs, and seek and utilize the resources and counsel of other NGOs is a critical factor in building sustainability and ensuring a vital and viable sector. ISC worked to break down some of the distrust and factionalism that existed between the NGOs and SOs and promote collaboration.

The absence of a clear legal structure for NGOs and lack of a tradition of public service created little sense of community among those working in the civil society sector. This problem was exacerbated by the limited capacity of NGO staff members, who are focused on the survival of the NGO and lack time to collaborate externally with other NGOs (an exception to this was the network established by Open Society Foundation among their Open Society Clubs). These factors underscored the need for support organizations to stimulate cooperation, information-sharing, and partnership.

The changing democratic and legal environment in Bulgaria and DemNet's emphasis on the need for Bulgarian organizations to build their capacities to serve the broader NGO sector raised the value of networking and led to the following examples of cooperation:

- Open Society Club-Varna established a network of NGOs working in more than 70 towns and villages in the regions of Varna, Dobrich, Shuman, and Targovishte in northeastern Bulgaria. With the aim of building capacity in the small NGOs, Varna used a formalized network to provide training and technical assistance, and provided a forum where NGOs could share experiences and identify areas for cooperation. Because of this support, *75 percent of the NGOs in the partnership were able to raise additional program funds from other Bulgarian and international donor programs*; and NGOs from one region transferred programs and skills to NGOs in less-developed regions. OSC-Varna will continue to support the network following the close of DemNet.

- Thirty NGOs that participated in the Democratic Citizen Coalition project to build civil society in small communities *formed an Association of NGOs from Small Communities*. The main goals of the association are to unite and coordinate the efforts of small town NGOs toward building a civic and democratic culture, represent their interests to national and local authorities and in-country and international donors, and develop programs for joint NGO activities.

STRENGTHENING OUTREACH & PUBLIC RELATIONS

NGOs must have sufficient skills and options for attracting public attention and support to remain accountable to their constituents and financially viable. In light of this reality, DemNet worked with NGOs to build outreach and public-relations skills:

- To bring policy issues to more stakeholders, the Center for Economic Development (CED) Foundation *reported its analysis of the pension-reform process* in Bulgaria to the general public through reports on DARIK radio and on the CED website. The analysis was also presented at a conference organized by the State Insurance Supervision Agency followed by a meeting with the manager of the National Social Security Institute, and a larger seminar bringing together members of the administration and experts with differing viewpoints.
- Prior to training by BMC, the environmental NGO "Project Eastern Rhodope Mountains" believed its programs were not attractive to the media. At the training, the NGO discussed its issues with local journalists and learned that the journalists found its activities compelling and newsworthy. With additional training on media and public relations, the NGO succeeded in *generating a number of articles in local papers and reports on cable television*.

A list of NGO grantees supported by the SO partners is included in Attachment K.

VII. Lessons Learned

ISC believes the essential qualities of strong programming are responsiveness to an often dynamic environment and flexibility to adapt to new opportunities—all within a framework of clear purpose and direction. The evolution of the DemNet program from design to implementation reflects these qualities, and is evidenced in lessons learned. The lessons learned represented here focus on those that would be beneficial to similar programs looking to develop the capabilities of support organizations.

Working with a broad geographic and programmatic cross section of support organizations is important to creating lasting capacity in Bulgaria. Rather than creating one or two large support organizations to provide all services to the NGO sector, the USAID program design recognized that a wide variety of existing organizations in Sofia and throughout the country had the potential to become strong support organizations. Through its extensive outreach and consultation, ISC was able to achieve broad geographic and programmatic diversity among the SOs selected. This met specific needs in Bulgaria for two reasons: It meant that the SO partners reflected the existing capacity in the sector; and acknowledged realities of competitiveness among NGOs, particularly between those based in Sofia and those outside the capital.

Selecting 13 SOs prevented the concentration of power and control that can come with donor funds. Concentration of power in an environment already characterized by lack of cooperation would likely have threatened the subsequent program implementation. Developing the capacity of a core group of SOs to assume responsibility for delivering services and support to the NGO sector provided greater depth, capacity, and sustainability within the sector. The geographic diversity helped to balance the level of support available in the capital with the regions, and strengthened regional support networks—making for a stronger NGO sector overall.

Maintaining continuity in provision of services to the NGO sector needs to be factored into implementation. Transitioning from a program where a U.S. implementer (ISC) provides support services to the NGO sector directly (DemNet I), to one where in-country organizations provide them (DemNet II) made for a significant shift in implementation strategy that created a gap in providing services, particularly in grantmaking. While other EU grantmaking programs existed, USAID's program was a

significant source of funding for the broader NGO sector. In addition, consultation and a competitive application process—both essential in good design—meant that SO selection was delayed. ISC and USAID debated whether to hold an interim grant round managed by ISC, but opted to stay with the design of having all services provided by the SOs. The interim grant round would have provided for more continuity of service provision and would likely have been the best way to close the gap. A more compressed timeframe for consultation and selection could have hastened program start up, but at the expense of having clear priorities and broad engagement.

Advisory bodies play an important role, but need clear definition of authority. Creating the program committee was a key aspect of ISC's participatory process. In concept it was sound; however, given the level of funding and resources at stake, its political significance was underestimated in the Bulgarian context. Involving a stakeholder group in program design, selection, and funding of SOs was new to the NGO sector in Bulgaria, where there was no tradition and practice for this sort of program governance. The initial terms of reference for the program committee were ambiguous in defining the level of authority of the committee, and resulted in political battles that, at one point, threatened to undermine the program. While USAID was strongly supportive of ISC's role and issues were ultimately resolved to the benefit of the program, ISC should have more clearly defined the distinctions in decisionmaking authority among the committee, ISC, and USAID.

The authority of advisory bodies can represent a delicate decisionmaking point on USAID projects in particular. There is a tension among the desire to empower in-country stakeholders as decisionmakers, the programmatic and fiduciary responsibilities of the implementing organization to the funder, and the funder's authority and scope of involvement in program decisionmaking. The implementer and the funder need to carefully discuss and consider the level of authority being given to advisory bodies, with both being clear on how much authority they can and want to cede to in-country partners. Based on ISC's experience with similar bodies on other programs, it is also important to recognize that the role of the advisory body can and likely will change over time as advisory members increase their understanding of the program and its objectives.

Organizational development is more effective and sustainable when it is participatory and applied practically. Civil society thrives on self-direction and the creativity that is released when people are empowered to make decisions and carry out their own projects. The participatory approach ISC infused in the DemNet program design was an effective way to strengthen the SO partners and open them to new ways of doing things. ISC focused on organizational development interventions that were self-directed and linked to immediate results in SO programs. Such tools as the organizational self assessment allowed the SOs greater control over both the assessment and its outcomes, building understanding and ownership of the improvements undertaken as well as trust with ISC. It is important to note that organizational development does not occur unless there is receptivity on the part of the organization and a basis of professional trust established between those providing development assistance and those receiving it. As trust was established, and the SOs recognized that ISC was working with them to strengthen their programs, they were more willing to accept organizational development interventions.

The entire organizational development process was better served by having the SOs pursue program implementation and organizational strengthening simultaneously. By targeting programming and service quality, both the SO and ISC were able to further refine what type of organizational development interventions were needed, and for the interventions to be applied toward producing immediate results.

The partnership with DemNet was empowering for the SOs, and provided them with the kind of freedom and motivation they needed to pursue creative and innovative strategies to better serve their NGO constituents. Every SO interviewed reported that the flexibility that the DemNet staff showed when it came to addressing changing conditions and priorities was critical to their success.

The capacity to take best advantage of assistance varies among organizations. Learning occurred according to the individual needs of the organization and its capacity to absorb and use information, and its organizational creativity and receptivity. As a result, the development of support organizations was not equal across the board.

The organizations that were less successful in absorbing the assistance were less focused in terms of their overall organizational mission, and/or were spread too thin. In one case, the SO suffered from the curse of success. It received several other big projects at the same time that it began the DemNet program, and subsequently the amount of attention they could devote to the requirements of DemNet was inadequate.

The philanthropic, investment, and legal environments to support and sustain NGOs are not predictable.

DemNet II began at a time of optimism for positive change in Bulgaria; however, while the NGO sector has matured over the four years of DemNet II implementation, the political, economic, and social environment has not developed sufficiently for SOs and NGOs to rely on local resources as a major funding source.

Within Bulgaria, the present tax and social structure does not support philanthropic activity at a mass level. Income-generating activities for NGOs under the new NGO Law are still, for the most part, untested. National economic recovery is, at best, uneven, which means that possible income from contracting and fees-for-services is limited. Even when local resource mobilization is successful, the funds generated are not sufficient to maintain the program level that support organizations were able to develop with international donor resources.

Many international donors have been affected by the global economic downturn, and some are leaving Bulgaria or curtailing programs. NGOs are concerned that EU support for accession activities will be limited to a narrow group of NGOs. The Trust for Civil Society, currently exploring the possibility of moving into Bulgaria, has not materialized in the manner first anticipated. As the program ended, the SOs had developed better skills for outreach and representation and local resource mobilization, but the economic conditions are still too weak to support them with Bulgarian resources alone.

VIII. Conclusion

By the close of DemNet II, ISC had dramatically increased the capability of the NGO sector in Bulgaria to effectively respond to issues of public concern, influence public policy issues, mobilize resources, form networks and share information, and monitor and evaluate their work.

Financial controls and practices that meet international standards are in place, organizations have strategic plans that outline clear priorities and expectations for growth and development, and skills have improved with respect to grantmaking, media relations, training program development and delivery, and constituent outreach and mobilization.

The NGO sector is likewise better equipped to handle the economic challenges that continue to affect Bulgaria. With a stronger NGO sector in place, citizens are better positioned to fully participate in local, regional, and national decisionmaking.

In the coming years, the NGO sector in Bulgaria along with the national and international donor community must take care to ensure that the systems put in place by DemNet are strengthened and expanded upon, rather than falling victim to decreased funding or renewed competition. The impact and sustainability of the DemNet project is perhaps best summed up by a support organization partner's comments made during a PARI-sponsored Opinion Makers roundtable in November 2002:

I would like to finish with several words telling you what the Democracy Network Program accomplished during the last three years. I in no way am able to be exhaustive in everything done by DemNet II and that is why I would like to mention two things only.

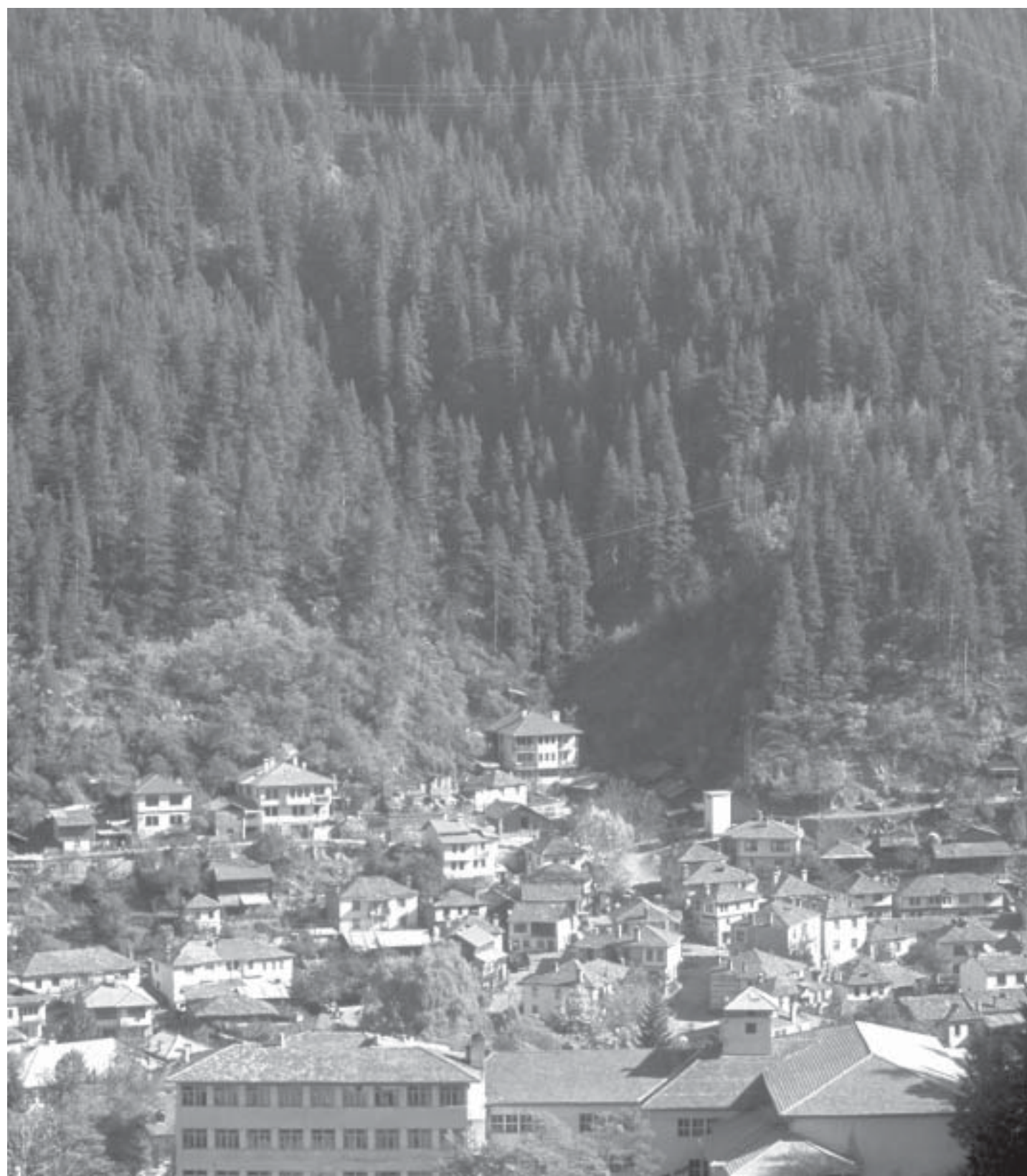
The first is, that DemNet II promoted the professionalization of the activities in this sector and, no doubt about it, it promoted also the development of the organizations in this sector both in terms of institutionalization and developing their expertise and professionalism.

The second accomplishment by the DemNet II is that it allowed a partial decentralization of the process of making decisions in the sector, inclusive of the issues of funding. These are ... represented, for example, by Open Society Club - Varna that is funding the entire Northeastern Bulgaria through small grants, but for significant things. These few cases are exclusively important signs of a positive and necessary process for this sector, as a whole.

The capacity of SOs and the NGOs they support to provide quality programming over the long-term remains a challenge given the current economic climate. A vibrant economy and social sector and an enabling legal and philanthropic environment are evolving in Bulgaria, but need to be strengthened to substantially improve resources for the sector. ISC's SO partners, however, have proven their capacity to engage citizens, provide quality services to the NGO sector, and manage themselves efficiently and professionally despite this challenging environment.

IX. Attachments

- A: DemNet SO Partner Publication
- B: SO Partner Summaries
- C: Organizational Strengthening & Performance Monitoring Components
- D: Service Quality Review Report
- E: Donor Survey Executive Summary
- F: ENGAGE Initiative Report
- G: *Travel Notes* Publication (ENGAGE Initiative)
- H: *Voices for Change* Publication
- I: Advocacy Initiative Report
- J: *Leading Lights* Publication
- K: Summary of NGO Grantees
- L: *Sense of Empowerment* Video





ISC's mission is to
help communities around
the world address
environmental, economic,
and social challenges
to build a better future
shaped and shared by all.

**Attachments to the Bulgaria Democracy Network Program
(DemNet II) Final Report**

U.S. Agency for International Development

Cooperative Agreement No. 181-A-00-98-00320-00

**Institute for Sustainable Communities
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April 2003

Attachment A: DemNet SO Publication

If you are interested in the publication *DemNet Support Organizations* please visit our website at iscvt.org.

Attachment B: SO Partner Summaries

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Area of Service under DemNet

Training and Technical Assistance

Program Summary

The aim of the program was to support development of the civic sector in the districts of Vidin, Montana and Vratsa. Targeting NGOs, a program was designed to provide a package of services to strengthen capacity and create a favourable environment for civil society. Services included information access; training and qualification courses; technical assistance and consultations; advocacy with local, regional and national authorities; and help establishing partnerships and contacts in the region and across the border.

Total Program Grant \$53,985

Areas of Program Coverage Districts of Vidin, Montana and Vratsa

Program Results/Activities

Increased information to the sector through a print and electronic newsletter.

Raised NGO profile in the region through a monthly radio program and publication of a guidebook (Bulgarian and English) on Northwestern NGOs which was distributed to local authorities, state institutions, donors and other NGOs.

Enhanced NGO capacity through provision of (1) 27 training programs including strategic planning, project development and implementation, NGO management, NGO law, NGO accounting systems; (2) individual consultancies on legal issues, project implementation and accountancy to 95 NGO representatives; (3) technical services – including word processing and PC/Internet access; and (4) rooms and equipment for presentations.

Greater NGO capacity to develop proposals and win funding.

Increased dialogue and cooperation between NGOs and municipal representatives, district authorities, and local Members of Parliament.

Familiarity with new concept of paid services for NGOs.

Expanded cross-border (Romania and Serbia) partnerships with NGOs.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Two grants totaling \$17,529 for equipment, accounting software, and Training of Trainers for the region.
- 2 KPMG Audit.
- 3 Participation in ISC training on NGO law, public relations, and media communications.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Improved strategic and long term planning.

Increased effectiveness and efficiency based upon ongoing application of Organizational Assessment Tool.

Increased training capacity in region.
Improved program implementation skills.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Identify ways to motivate staff members.
Diversify financial resources.
Work to establish partnerships between NGOs and/or authorities for solving specific problems.
Continue to strengthen external relationships.

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Area of Service under DemNet

National Grantmaking and Resource Mobilization

Program Summary

The aim of the BCAF program, known as “Partners,” was to implement a national grants program to encourage sustainability through local resource mobilization as well as partnerships with local authorities and businesses. Strategies included (1) strengthening of grantees’ financial management systems; (2) motivating the creation of inter-sectoral partnerships under the NGO initiative; (3) generating greater local support; and (4) improving NGO skills in project development and implementation. A total of 77 grants were awarded in seven grant rounds and addressed the areas of Economic Development, Social Safety Net Improvement, Democracy Strengthening and Environmental Protection. Based upon assessments, BACF further targeted its grant program to support social entrepreneurship and advocacy.

Total Program Grant \$475,084

Areas of Program Coverage 36 communities nation-wide: Alfatar, Ardino, Blagoevgrad, Bourgas, Chepelare, Varna, Vidin, Vratza, Baborovo, Gorna Oryahovitsa, Devin, Dobrich, Zlatograd, Kazanluk, Kardjali, Kurtovo Konare, Kyustendil, Lovech, Pazardjik, Pirdop, Pleven, Plovdiv, Pomorie, Rousse, Satovcha, Svishtov, Silistra, Sliven, Svilengrad, Sofia, Stara Zagora, Troyan, Haskovo, Shiroka Luka Village, Shouman, Yambol.

Program Results/Activities

Increased NGO access to funding through implementation of national grant program.
Successfully instituted cost-sharing requirement of up to 30 percent.
Increased public profile through media presence and public relations strategy.
Achieved national grantmaking recognition as implementers of PHARE ACCESS grant program.
Improved information flows and technical assistance access by establishing network of grantees.
Enhanced ability to mobilize local resources through provision of training and technical assistance.
Developed better methods for addressing under-served areas through grant rounds based on findings from needs assessments.
Secured support for charitable activities by establishing relations with the private sector through a Business Advisory Committee.
Promoted best practices of cross-sectoral partnerships by grantees and of NGO-Donor communication strategies by producing two publications.

Enhanced NGO access to information by producing and disseminating a “Partners Bulletin” on NGO issues and activities.
Contributed to pressure for changes in the tax law to favor charitable contributions by participating in coalition lobby efforts.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Three organizational strengthening grants totaling \$22,195 for consultants in financial review and control systems and training of accountant, resource mobilization, communications, donor relations, media, business development, legal assistance; development of Business Advisory Committee; American Chamber of Commerce and Business Leaders Forum memberships; equipment, research and analysis on granting practices.
- 2 ACCESS program course for all staff.
- 3 KPMG Audit.
- 4 Participation in ISC training programs on grantmaking practices, civic participation, advocacy skills, media relations, and local resource mobilization.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Strengthened financial management systems.
Increased board participation and improved board/staff communications.
Instituted annual planning and board/staff retreats.
Expanded media coverage and improved public image.
Strengthened staff skills.
Established effective relations with local authorities and with the private sector.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Preserve the ability to maintain direct contact with organizations in the field and to address local needs.
Keep flexible approach toward future grantees that takes into consideration changes in the environment.
Maintain a balance between BCAF’s traditional activities and new endeavours.
Consider offering some of the traditional activities through paid services and consultations.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Training and Technical Assistance
Information Sharing and Networking

Program Summary

The BMC program, “Professionalizing NGO-Media Relations to Increase Civic Impact over Public Policy,” sought to build the capacity of NGOs to work effectively with media. In this phase, BMC carried out 22 training seminars with 456 representatives of 376 NGOs and 225 journalists representing 198 electronic and print media from 60 communities. BMC also monitored and analyzed media coverage of NGOs and to disseminate their findings to the NGO and media community. The purpose was to inform the media how they were perceived and how they covered NGO and minority issues in Bulgaria, with the goal of identifying problems to begin to search for

solutions. BMC also provided information to journalists on legal rights regarding access to information.

Total Program Grant \$226,088

Areas of Program Coverage Blagoevgrad, Gabrovo, Sevlievo, Bankya, Sofia, Smolyan, Chepelare, Devin, Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Dryanovo, Troyan, Lovech, Lom, Brusartzi, Gorna Oryahovitza, Montana, Zlatograd, Shumen

Program Results/Activities

Improved media coverage for NGOs participating in training programs.

Strengthened NGO skills in interviewing and in developing press releases and promotional materials.

Improved tools and skills for NGO members and journalists to actively and competently address institutions about issues concerning access to public information.

Heightened awareness of media opportunities for NGOs through publication of a handbook, "ABC's of NGO Work with Media."

Greater attention focused on ethics through publication of two reports, "Ethnic Press in Bulgaria" and "Ethnic Minorities in the Press."

NGO monitoring research made available through BMC publication, "Third Sector, Fourth Power."

Information made available to journalists, the media, and NGOs via establishment of website.

Training activities and publications compiled and made available on CD for distribution to NGOs.

Organization Strengthening

1. Three grants totaling \$14,205 for board development and retreats; equipment; accounting software and training; and staff training in office administration, project management and team building.
2. Task groups formed to explore and recommend resource mobilization opportunities such as member service fees, periodical materials sales, and portal Website support.
3. KPMG Audit.
4. Consultant provided in resource mobilization and sustainability planning and in personnel recruitment procedures.
5. Participant in ISC trainings on civic participation and local resource mobilization.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Improved financial and program management systems.

Strengthened staff capacity to implement and manage programs.

Institutionalized annual meetings for adoption of annual plans.

Improved service delivery capacity to member-organizations and beneficiaries.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

The balance between the network/advocacy functions of BMC and training service provider roles could be improved by establishing a separate training unit for coordination and management of the training program.

Clear advisory support mechanism should be established, so that it will not exclude some users at the expense of others.

Training methodology could be improved by introducing a "training of trainers" module and through the development of specific regional cases.

Inequality of different organizations that BMC serves should be avoided by searching for a better balance between high techs and traditional communication channels.

Participation of regional journalists in the program should be encouraged by gradually bringing them in as experts and advisors.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Public Policy Analysis

Program Summary

CED promoted an approach to public policy development that brought together the public and private sectors to formulate policies and improve implementation. The program had the following objectives: 1) to strengthen citizen capacity to analyze economic reform policies and influence policy formulation and implementation process; 2) form citizen alliances and increase public awareness of their capacity to effectively advocate for responsive policies; and 3) provide NGOs with resources for targeted advocacy that mobilizes and engages citizens. The core policy areas of focus were Economic Justice through SME Development, Fair Taxation via Public Debate, and Social Benefit Reform to Benefit Bulgarians.

Total Program Grant \$93,643

Areas of Program Coverage Sofia, Varna, Rousse

Program Results/Activities

Increased public awareness of policy debate through Website and publication of CED Bulletin, public events and media promotion.
Increased participation of target groups – business associations, business centers, employer associations, regional development authorities, central authorities – in policy debate through focus groups, task forces, seminars and workshops.
Networking and information sharing promoted through conference on “Tax Growth and Economic Policy.”
Increased NGO understanding of enterprise through publication of book on small and medium enterprise (SMEs) and competitiveness.
NGO interests promoted through presentation of workshop on assessment of tax policy to central authorities, social groups and experts.
Advocacy agenda advanced by conducting roundtable to propose changes on new tax legislation amendments.
Information shared by presentation of policy paper on Pension Reform.
The development of a supportive legal, informational and business environment for creating new jobs promoted by coordinating with Resource Center Foundation on national and regional activities for the advancement of SMEs and entrepreneurship.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Three grants totalling \$18,636 for teambuilding seminars for CED researchers with government institutions and foreign institutions to create a favourable environment for obtaining and accessing economic data, external audit support, and creation of an in-house economic database.
- 2 Staff participation in Information Technology Forum.
- 3 Staff participation in Conference “Sustainability of the Third Sector”, held in Budapest.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Improved staff capacity through training.
Strengthened relations between research staff and government institutions.

Improved economic information retrieval through database.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Develop more effective mechanism for studying the impact on the final users of CED products. Continue the effort to develop CED as the lead consultation center for NGOs in the area of economic development with emphasis on issues related to fund raising and provision of technical assistance for development of EC funded projects.

The Center's advocacy function should be optimized and focused on creating more possibilities for a broader circle of organizations to be represented before national authorities.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Public Policy Analysis

Program Summary

Assisting citizen groups to engage in and maintain a lasting system of dialogue and cooperation with public institutions was the aim of the DemNet CSP project, "Citizen Involvement in Public Policies and Regional Development." The strategy was to develop the knowledge, skills, and techniques of a critical mass of NGO leaders selected from six regions so they could access information, participate in policy debate, and impact policy for development at the local and regional levels. The activities for achieving the objectives were to: 1) form coalitions of local NGOs, which would become driving forces behind development projects; 2) create a large group (permanent network) of all participants in the project, including CSP, which will remain a resource after the end of the project; 3) involve the network at the local level, with national NGOs, with regional and central power, and with local and central media; 4) provide selected leaders and their organizations with the appropriate skills and knowledge to become driving forces in the development process; and 5) move the created good practices horizontally to reach the broader sector.

Total Program Grant \$98,307

Areas of Program Coverage Sofia, Veliko Turnovo, Razgrad, Sozopol, Shumen, Rousse, Bourgas, Kardjali, Smolyan, Varna, Haskovo, Kustendil

Program Results/Activities

Increased understanding of current level of development of the NGO sector by researching the main trends in start-up and disseminating results of studies through workshops in different regions of the country.

Networking and information sharing promoted by the formation of a core group of 29 NGO leaders from Rousse (6 organizations), Bourgas (4), Kardjali (6), Smolyan (5), Razgrad (4), and Kustendil (3), representing different areas of development and maturity in the non-governmental sector.

Improved NGO operations by providing customer-oriented training and ongoing support to the core group of NGOs on strategic planning, capacity building, coalition building, conflict and risk management, project management, leadership, advocacy and lobbying, and working with the media.

Strengthened citizen/customer involvement in policy cycle.

Public opinion better represented by (1) creation of a local methodology for citizen groups to participate in the decisionmaking process and (2) enhancement of capacity to implement the methodology.

Improved NGO government cooperation in several communities resulting in joint projects.

Increased capacity of selected NGOs to design, win and implement projects.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Two grants totaling \$6,381 for staff training in English language, desk top publishing, applied research, community capacity assessment, NGO management; consultants used to improve financial management and fundraising, train accountant in accounting standards; and conduct team-building retreat for CDP staff, key volunteers, associates and experts.
- 2 KPMG Audit.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Strengthened project and financial management.

Implemented strategic planning including long-term financial planning.

Developed internal policies and procedures.

Strengthened staff capacity.

Developed fundraising program.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Delegate more responsibilities to staff members.

Strengthen new policies and procedures and financial controls with more detailed internal guides for staff and strengthened citizen/customer involvement in policy cycle.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Training and Technical Assistance

Program Summary

The DCC program, "The Social Capital of Small Towns," strengthened democratic processes in small communities by affirming the role of NGOs working with local authorities to solve problems, encouraging volunteerism and engaging young people in sustaining democratic practices. DCC's strategies were to study the development needs of NGOs in small communities and to design a training and support program to address those needs. Training included NGO management, project management, proposal writing, board development, fundraising, transparency and accountability, working with media, and monitoring and evaluation.

Total Program Grant \$144,956

Areas of Program Coverage More than 160 NGOs representing the districts of Blagoevgrad, Bourgas, Varna, Veliko Turnovo, Pleven, Plovdiv, Pazardjik, Rousse, Silistra, Sofia, Stara Zagora and Yambol.

Program Results/Activities

Strengthened capacity of regional centers (coalition partners) to implement and manage training programs and consultancies.

Developed a team of regional trainers with strengthened skills and capacity through Training of Trainers and mentoring programs.

Improved NGO capacity by the design and development of a twelve module program for training NGOs from small towns.

Leveraged DemNet training by adapting DemNet organizational strengthening tool for use by school boards of directors and providing ongoing training and support.

Increased capacity of NGOs to develop and win proposals, number of signed partnerships with municipalities, formation of coalitions, volunteer recruitment and participation of young people.

Encouraged networking by the establishment of an “Association of NGOs from Small Towns” which brought together more than 100 NGOs.

Helped increase knowledge of best practices of NGOs from small communities by disseminating a publication on the topic.

Improved private sector relations by registering a commercial company for the coalition partner in Yambol to support further training activities.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Three grants totaling \$22,543 for organizational assessment and strengthening; planning retreat for coalition partners; training workshops for regional development strategies; development of new program materials; external consultant to explore readiness for business activities – fees for service; regional seminars on NGO Marketing; and equipment. Selection and appointment of an editorial board to ensure quality of training materials and development of a DCC office policies and procedures manual, coalition partner team building, trainers’ coaching sessions, TOT programs for trainers, and the introduction of accounting systems for five regional coalition partners.
- 2 KPMG Audit.
- 3 Training for coalition partner staff on English language, computer, and NGO law.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Strengthened central financial management as well as financial and accounting systems of regional coalition partners.

Strengthened service delivery capacity.

Elaboration of an integrated plan for further institutional development.

Strengthened coalition partners in teamwork, financial management and service delivery.

System of coaching and supervision established for new trainers.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Continue to support the Association of NGOs from Small Towns established under DemNet.

Continue the participatory organizational strengthening process with coalition members.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Public policy analysis

Program Summary

Through the IRIS program, “Enhancing Public Influence and Exercising Control over the Decision-Making Process,” IRIS developed and tested a model for increasing advocacy skills among NGOs

*Bulgaria Democracy Network II Program
Final Report Attachment*

and citizen groups. The program combined research with practical application by testing a four-step approach for Bulgarian advocacy campaigns 1) Strategic Planning; 2) Coalition Building; 3) Working With Media; and 4) Dialogue With Relevant Authorities.

Total Program Grant \$225,983

Areas of Program Coverage Sofia, Plovdiv, Sliven, Stara Zagora, Gabrovo,

Program Results/Activities

Documented policy changes:

Approval of a proposed amendment to the local Municipal Ordinance on the disposal of solid domestic waste in Gabrovo.

An amendment of the National Law for the Protection, Rehabilitation and Social Integration of the Handicapped.

Establishment of a Public Fund for the Community Centers in Pleven.

Four permanent local Advisory Councils for Social Services formed. Some permanent local Advisory Councils will continue to generate influence and defend civil interests.

Additional results:

Increased public awareness and information sharing on advocacy issues.

Increased competence and skills in advocacy shared by all IRIS CSO partners.

Established network of CSO advocates and a team of advocacy experts.

Publication of a handbook on advocacy.

Publication of the research on the program presenting main findings and lessons learned.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Two grants totaling \$9,900 for technical equipment and financial management improvement, including accounting software.
- 2 KPMG Audit.
- 3 Inclusion on ISC advocacy needs assessment, curriculum development, and training program.
- 4 Participation in ISC workshops on PR and communications, citizen participation, local resource mobilization, and sustainability planning.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Enhanced advocacy skills and training capacity.

Upgrading of equipment to support programs.

Strengthened financial systems.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Create a system for further exchange of experience and information among the leaders of advocacy campaigns, in order to overcome the effect of adversarial pressure, support established local resources, and maintain momentum.

Consider building a permanent group of local trainers, able to respond to the growing need for training and consultation for the advocacy techniques.

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Information Sharing and Networking

Co-Implementer of ENGAGE Project

Program Summary

The NGO Center Kardjali program, “Stimulating Sustainable Models,” established an information network in the Eastern Rhodope region that, through dialogue, technical assistance, cooperation and partnership building, would increase the capacity of NGOs to initiate and participate in policy dialogue and practices in support of sustainable development. The program emphasized NGO cooperation with local authorities to achieve common goals by creating forums for interaction. The network embraces the region’s geographic challenges and its mixed ethnic, religious, and cultural groups.

Total Program Grant \$74,503

Areas of Program Coverage Kardjali, Kirkovo, Krumovgrad, Momchilgrad, Chernoochene, Ardino, Djebel, Ivailovgrad, Pripek

Program Results/Activities

Information units in six municipalities: Kirkovo, Krumovgrad, Momchilgrad, Chernoochene, Ardino and Djebel; and twice-monthly on-site consultations and citizen/NGO meetings held with mayors and local officials.

Databank of sociological and ethnological research established in the six municipalities of Kardjali district.

Greater public awareness achieved through the conduct and dissemination of research on the civil sector in Kardjali district at a workshop with citizens, NGO staff, and local authorities.

Increased media coverage of NGO initiatives in the region.

Organized a forum on regional development that included the ministers of Finance and Regional Development, representatives of Kardjali District and six municipalities as well as businesses, NGOs, and both central and local media. Results include (1) a BGL 57 million contract that will employ 500 people engaged in “Strengthening the Riversides of Arda River;” and (2) establishment of an office in the Social Ministry in Kardjali under the EU Phare program.

Successfully implemented the ENGAGE project in three communities in Kardjali district in partnership with ISC resulting in the formation of a regional NGO to support citizen initiatives.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Two grants totalling \$4,621 for the purchase of equipment, working meetings of the board and staff to strengthen governance and management systems, enlarging learning resource library, training on international audit accounting standards for financial manager and accountant, and installation of and training on accounting software.
- 2 As ISC partners in the implementation of ENGAGE, training in group facilitation, community needs assessment and priority setting, project implementation, and community celebrations.
- 3 Participation in ISC workshops on PR and communications, citizen participation, local resource mobilization, and sustainability planning.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Improved financial management and accounting practices.

Enhanced functioning of the board of directors.

Consolidated mission.

Integrated public outreach and media strategy.

Increased project management capacity.

Improved human resource development.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Develop a system for raising the competence and skills of central office staff and staff of the six information offices, particularly in the area of providing customer driven services.

Expand the network of information units.

Develop a group of local consultants and information providers.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Grant Making and Resource Mobilization

Program Summary

The aim of OSC Rousse's program, "In Search of Sustainable Paradigms," was to establish sustainable non-profit organizations offering a broad spectrum of services to meet the needs of the community. It was designed to support third sector development through grants and mobilizing local resources in the districts of Rousse, Razgrad, Silistra and Veliko Turnovo. The program focused on solving local problems as the first step in engaging citizen participation. Fifty-two projects were financed and cover the areas of Economic Development (13 projects), Democracy Strengthening (20 projects), and Environmental Protection (19 projects). Participating NGOs also received technical support through consultations to strengthen program and financial management.

Total Program Grant \$208,406

Areas of Program Coverage

Rousse District: Rousse, Vyatovo, Slivo Pole Village, Basarbovo Village – St. Dimitar Basarbovskij Monastery, Borovo, Byala, Rousse Lom Natural Park, Marten Village, Ryahovo Village, Sandrovo Village, Batin Village, Mechka Village, Pirgovo Village, Ivanovo Village, Batishnitsa Village. Razgrad District: Razgrad, Dyankovo Village, Loznitsa Village, Tsar Kaloyan, Isparih – Sboryanovo Reserve, Zavetk, Rakovski Village, Seidol Village. Silistra District: Silistra, Tutrakan, Bogdantsi Village, Iskra Village, Sreburna Reserve, Gabrovo District. Pleven District: Cherven Bryag. Veliko. Turnovo District: Veliko Turnovo, Strazhitsa, Pavlikeni, Zlatarica, Svishtov, Oresh Village, Gorna Oryahovitsa, Debelets, Kilifarevo, Elena.

Program Results/Activities

Successfully implemented a regional grant program that strengthened NGO capacity and networking.

Established OSC –Rousse as an effective grantmaker and regional player serving the third sector and interfacing with authorities in local and regional development.

Formed a regional partnership of NGOs to influence development in north central Bulgaria.

Provided technical assistance to grantees in project design, financial and program reporting, and other donor applications.

Provided technical assistance to unsuccessful applicants that resulted in increased successful applications to OSC-Rousse and other donors.

Improved project monitoring practices in terms of strengthening beneficiary capacity.

Developed a media strategy resulting in increased coverage from both print and electronic media in the region served.

Initiated cost share requirements and partnership with local authorities for grantees.

Produced book on best practices of grantees.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Three organizational strengthening grants totaling \$11,898 for staff/board development, resource materials for grantees, legal consultation, financial consultant, accounting software, and partial support of business plan to sustain organization.

- 2 Targeted training provided for participation in accounting seminars, English language training for staff, and project monitoring and evaluation.
- 3 KPMG Audit.
- 4 Participation in ISC training programs on grantmaking practices, logic modeling, NGO sustainability, advocacy, communications, and public relations.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Strengthened grantmaking and project monitoring capacity.
 Fundraising and business strategy developed and implemented.
 Improved financial management.
 Increased capacity of staff to work with donors as the result of English language training.
 Improved board/staff relations.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Grantmaking and Resource Mobilization

Program Summary

“NGO Partnership Network Development on Behalf of the Citizens of Northeastern Bulgaria” aimed at stimulating the development of NGOs and increasing the capacity of the third sector in Northeast Bulgaria to put the region on par with the rest of the country. Another objective was to achieve quality among NGOs outside the Sofia nexus in terms of receiving grants and services. The program sought to stimulate civil society and promote local philanthropy in the region through support of 80 projects. These project were carried out by 55 NGOs in the regions of Varna, Dobrich, Shumen and Targovishte and covered the issues of Economic Development (15 projects), Democracy Strengthening (24 projects), Environmental Protection (19 projects), and Social Safety Net Improvement (22 projects) for a total of \$330,257.50.

Total Program Grant \$352,709

Areas of Program Coverage Varna, Dobrich, Shumen, and Targovishte

Program Results/Activities

Increased regional NGO capacity and networking opportunities through implementation of a regional grant program.
 Improved ability to assist under-developed NGOs by adapting the grant program and increasing training and technical assistance opportunities.
 Facilitated greater NGO networking by organizing meetings of the sector to discuss issues of local and regional importance.
 Established a network of NGOs and community organizations in the Northeast region covering more than 70 towns and villages working to stimulate civic participation.
 Initiated cost share and partnership requirements for grant programs.
 Improved grant application quality by providing targeted training, technical assistance, and individual consultations to NGOs in the network and by working to improve the submissions of unsuccessful applicants.
 Improved access to information by distributing reference resource materials to NGOs in small communities.
 Improved monitoring system through greater formalization of ongoing efforts.

Enhanced outreach by producing *Open Doors*, a book describing stories of change as the result of civic participation.

Increased volunteer participation in programs.

Increased level of NGO involvement with local authorities, educational institutions and media.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 One grant of \$20,000 for a guided program of planning and development by OSC board and Club members facilitated by external consultant, translation of board development materials, staff retreats; equipment, accounting software and training, and fund-raising consultations with selected donors.
- 2 KPMG Audit.
- 3 Training and additional assistance provided in project evaluation, English language, conference participation, and audit translation.
- 4 Participation in ISC trainings on communications and public relations, sustainability planning, and civic participation.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Strengthened financial and program management.

Developed 3 year strategic plan for the Club.

Developed system for recruiting new members and motivating old members.

Secured greater involvement of board and Club members in strategic planning.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Work to retain the present effectiveness and flexibility in the process of present growth and regional expansion.

Develop the project monitoring capacity as an advisory resource for the Northeast region.

Work towards bridging the gap between big and small organization in the four regions.

Formulate a vision and strategy that incorporates the NGO network into the Club's mission.

Use existing capacity to offer paid services and consultations.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Information Sharing and Networking

Program Summary

The RASED project, “Regional Program for Increasing the Capacity of the NGO Sector in Haskovo Region,” was designed to support civil society by strengthening the development of a responsible NGO sector. Targeting active NGOs in the region the project identified through a needs assessment process three thematic priority areas – environmental protection, social protection and regional economic development. The NGOs were organized into networks and received support and consultation to enhance their effectiveness.

Total Program Grant \$51,190

Areas of Program Coverage Municipalities of Haskovo, Dimitrovgrad, Madjarovo, Stambolovo, Ivaylovgrad, Ljubimec, Svilengrad, Topolovgrad, Simeonovgrad, Mineralni Bani, and Harmanly

Program Results/Activities

Greater understanding of NGO sector established through survey of NGOs in Haskovo region.
Established three networks of NGOs that formed partnerships to address local issues.
Established cross-boarder partnerships with Turkish NGOs.
Improved dialogue between NGOs, local authorities, businesses and media by creating conditions for and facilitating process.
Expanded NGO knowledge of funding options by organizing the first regional donors' forum to bringing together NGOs, donors, and government representatives to share information about funding and contracting opportunities.
Established an information center and "Information Days" for NGOs.
Provided technical assistance in proposal development, strategic planning, funding options, and email and Internet access for NGOs.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Two grants totalling \$12,526 for training local consultants on regional development and legal issues, supporting RASED participation in regional development bodies, board and staff development, financial management training by consultant, accounting software, creation of RASED electronic database, and staff team building.
- 2 Staff training in English language.
- 3 KPMG Audit.
- 4 ISC-sponsored training on local resource mobilization, audit preparation, civic participation, public relations and communications, and sustainability planning.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Improved technical skills of staff and consultants.
Improved financial and program management.
More effective participation in regional decisionmaking bodies.
Regularized board and staff meetings.
Creation of a long-term financing plan.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Develop a system for measuring and recording impact.
Apply existing capacity in using financial instruments (such as cost benefit analysis and efficiency analysis) to NGO assistance.

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Grantmaking and Resource Mobilization
Information Sharing and Networking

Program Summary

"Providing Resource Support and Increasing Program and Informational Capacity of NGOs" was a nationwide RCF program that targeted NGOs with (1) strong interest in informational activities; (2) involvement in partnerships with the central government and municipalities; and (3) engagement in public sector reform and public policy involvement. Strengthening strategies included a small grants

program, advocacy assistance to create an enabling legal environment for NGOs, and opportunities to work with government institutions to improve NGO-government partnerships.

Total Program Grant \$264,310

Areas of Program Coverage Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Blagoevgrad, Haskovo, Stara Zagora, Targovishte, Gabrovo, Lovech, Devin, Madan, Veliko Turnovo, Vidin, Vratsa, Pazardjik, Rousse, Rakitova, Silistra, Sliven, Bourgas, Smolyan, Kardjali, Velingrad, Popovo, Tryavna, Karlovo, Laki, Teteven, village of Dolni Tsibar, Shouman, Pleven, Dryanovo, Pernik, Dobrich, Sredets, Svishtov, Dolni Chiflik, Berkovitsa, Stara Zagora, Cherven Bryag, Village of Stambolovo, Gorna Oryahovtsa, Petrich, Svilengrad, Svishtov, Nessebar, Bolarovo, Village of Stefan Karadjovo, Etropole, Byala, Chernomorets, Belene, Nikopol, Nova Zagora, Village of Dolna Lipnitsa, Madan, Pomorie, and Yakorouda.

Program Results/Activities

Helped ensure passage of NGO law by coordinating successful advocacy campaign.

Organized follow up training for NGOs on how to interpret the new law.

Helped establish coalition for advocating changes to tax laws that regulate charitable contributions.

Provided start-up and assistance to the Ministry of Justice on an electronic system for the Central Public Register for NPLEs (Non Profit Legal Entities) working for the public benefit.

Improved networking by creating an NGO catalogue – hard copy and electronic version.

Promoted information sharing and exposure by publishing an informational bulletin on NGO activities, creating a distribution network throughout Bulgaria to provide information to NGOs, and establishing a website to provide information to and on NGOs.

Improved understanding of private sector by providing consultative assistance on business activity for NGOs and on NGO-government relations.

Strengthened NGO capacity to work with government institutions and engage in procurement activities with government by providing grants, networking opportunities, and consultations to 13 NGOs.

Organization Strengthening

- 1 Three organizational strengthening grants totaling \$13,352 for the support of strategic planning meetings and strategic development, organizational assessment follow-up, board development, analysis of grant programs, and market survey of NGO sector to determine RCF program niche.
- 2 KPMG Audit.
- 3 Participated in ISC-sponsored training.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

Increased board involvement in setting the strategic direction of RCF.

Elaboration of a strategic plan with guidelines for overall development of the Foundation.

Consolidated mission of the organization.

Certified under the ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

Clarification of the organizational structure is still needed and should be included as a component of the strategic plan.

The self-financing program of RCF should be improved and should include individual consultations on better meeting customer-specific needs.

Develop a clearer definition of and distinction between target groups that are eligible to participate in financing and training programs which take more into account the existing organizational and program capacity of the different organizations.

Dissemination of successful practices and methodology for interaction with state institutions would be of help to the NGO sector.

A mechanism for mobilizing and ensuring increased and more efficient participation of NGOs in advocacy campaigns should be developed based upon RCF's experience.

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Area of Service under DemNet

Grantmaking and Resource Mobilization, Training and Technical Assistance, Information Sharing and Networking

Program Summary

This comprehensive program strengthened the capacity of environmental NGOs to engage in policy dialogue and development through an integrated program of grants, training and technical assistance, information sharing, and networking. TIME Foundation targeted activities that supported advocacy, coalition-building, and sustainable development. BlueLink, a partner, managed the electronic information-sharing component under a sub-contract.

Total Program Grant \$300,000

Areas of Program Coverage Sofia area (villages of Jeleznica, Iarlovo, Rudarci, Kovachevci); Plovdiv area (villages of Gradina, Vinica, Chernozem); Varna; Stara Zagora; Svilengrad area (villages of Sakar mountain); North black sea region (the towns of Kavarna and Shabla and the villages of Kamen briag and Tulenovo); Zlatograd; Hadjidimovo municipality (villages of Paril, Teshovo, Lovcha, Ilinden, and Laki); Drianovo; Lovech; Belene; Blagoevgrad; Kalofer; Sitovo; Vlahi; and Borino.

Program Results/Activities

- Organized three national conferences of environmental NGOs.
- Strengthened information sharing and policy dialogue through BlueLink network and publication of "Ecopolis."
- Improved availability of resources for NGOs by implementing three grants sessions, one targeting advocacy initiatives and two targeting sustainable development practices.
- Strengthened capacity of environmental NGOs through training and consultation program.
- Improved communication and consolidation among environmental NGOs.
- Initiated Quick Activity Fund to support NGO initiatives.
- Influenced national legislation on Biodiversity Law.
- Greater involvement with government by participating in the Ministry of Environment task groups.
- Strengthened networking with NGO clients and among environmental NGOs.
- Published book on sustainable development practices.

Organization Strengthening

1. Two grants totaling \$15,369 for technical assistance on fund-raising and follow-up activities, legal consultation and bylaw development, management systems assistance, staff retreat, promotional brochure and annual report, website creation, English language training and equipment.
2. KPMG Audit.
3. ISC consultations on grants management.
4. Participation in ISC-sponsored trainings.

Organizational Strengthening Outcomes

- Strengthened program and financial management.
- More effective grantmaking capacity.
- Improved staff capacity.
- Improved service delivery and feedback systems.

Recommendations by PARI Consultant

- Develop more flexible training packages targeted to user needs.
- Improve communication with national authorities by working toward a strengthened NGO stakeholder's approach.
- Distinguish the function and role of TIME EcoProjects Foundation to serve as an intermediary between NGOs and national authorities and avoid potential conflicts of interest by appointing NGO representatives.
- Improve advocacy skill levels.

Attachment C: Organizational Strengthening and Performance Monitoring Components (compact disk)

The Organizational Strengthening and Performance Monitoring Components compact disk is not included with this electronic file. If you are interested in this CD, please contact the Institute for Sustainable Communities at 802-229-2900 or isc@iscvt.org.

Attachment D: Service Quality Review Report

SERVICE QUALITY REVIEW

Assessment of the Quality of Services

Delivered by

Democracy Network Support Organizations

By

Shirley Buzzard, Ph.D.

Heartlands International
Washington, DC

Final Report
April, 2002

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Democracy Network Program (DemNet) is funded by USAID/Bulgaria through a Cooperative Agreement with the Institute for Sustainable Communities. The project furthers USAID's strategic objective of increasing the participation of citizens in public policy discussions. During the first phase of the project (1995-1998), ISC/Bulgaria funded 124 projects and worked with 150 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to strengthen their service delivery, management, governance systems, and increase their influence in public policy.

During the second phase (1998-2002), they selected 13 NGOs, called Support Organizations (SOs) and worked with them to strengthen their capacity to provide services to other NGOs. Three of these organizations focus on training and information sharing, five make subgrants and provide support services to subgrantees, two are information sharing and networking organizations, and three are research and public policy institutes. It should be noted that most of the SOs have activities that are funded by other donors that were not part of this assessment.

This report covers the results of a service quality review of the second phase of DemNet. The objective of the study was to assess the quality of the services the DemNet SO partners are delivering to their NGOs partners throughout the country and offer recommendations for improvement.

The methodology for the study included a desk study of DemNet files followed by interviews and observations carried out by ten local consultants and concluding with a two-day data-analysis retreat. The assessment took place between July and December of 2001 with report writing and consultations with the SOs taking place in early 2002.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- Five of the DemNet SOs successfully administered subgrants to 117 local NGOs for a total of \$819,462. They have leveraged local resources such as volunteers, partnerships with local municipalities, and in-kind contributions to match an estimated 30 percent of this amount. Administering subgrants strengthened the SOs as organizations and they are commended for their ability to manage a transparent and effective subgrant process. The process of selecting grants recipients and other services is perceived to be transparent and fair.
- The SOs worked with hundreds of NGO partners and those working outside of Sofia are credited with creating a local NGO community in the regions where they work. There is a very high unmet need among local citizens for more information on how to organize to solve problems, how to leverage funds, and to learn from similar groups in other towns.
- While civil society in the regions where the SOs work has not yet reached the point where it has a large role in national policy debate, they are forming very strong partnerships with local government and have an increasing voice in local planning, decisionmaking, and problem solving.
- The SOs are credited with introducing a new way of participation in society that has not been available to citizens in the past. People no longer wait for government to solve problems but are organizing, talking, and collaborating on a wide range of social, environmental, economic, tourism, and ethnic issues. Many people, including women and minorities, who previously had no role, are now involved in the emerging NGO community. Volunteerism, as practiced by NGOs, is new concept in most towns. Yet community efforts to restore a monastery, clean up a riverfront, or do a survey of people with disabilities have stimulated community involvement to tackle other problems.
- The organizational capacity of DemNet SO Partners varies considerably. Some operate at a start-up level organizationally while others are much more sophisticated. The NGOs with whom the SOs

work are mostly inexperienced, under funded, and understaffed. SO Partners are able to design and carry out activities, do end-of-event evaluations, comply with work plans, and monitor budgets. They do not currently have the technical capacity to move to the next level of professionalism. This would include designing programs (not just activities) that would target root causes of problems, do cost-benefit analysis, and design strategic programs with measurable objectives aimed at behavioral change. The services they currently deliver are very much in demand and are highly valued by the participants in their programs.

- The sustainability of the programs is uncertain. Donor funding is decreasing and the NGOs are not finding ways to replace donor funds through fees for services or entrepreneurial activities. The three research organizations are most sustainable as they have multiple sources of income. Particularly for those organizations headquartered outside of Sofia, attracting funds is difficult.
- Because the SOs and their NGO partners are so dependent on the whims of various donors funding, they have been very grateful for the sustained financial and technical support they have received from DemNet. DemNet has been a model of participation, transparency, and customer service from which the SOs have learned and that they are passing on to their partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- USAID and ISC/Bulgaria should work together to find ways to assure continued funding for those SOs that are doing quality work but are not yet sustainable. To discontinue donor funding for these programs as planned in 2002 will jeopardize their sustainability and threaten the trust the SOs are building with local citizens and municipal leaders.
- USAID and other donors should reward good work by providing funds to replicate successful projects and providing follow-on grants that allow the projects to take root and become sustainable.
- During the final ten months of the project, DemNet should undertake, a major training and technical assistance initiative around results monitoring and the documentation of impact. The SOs and their NGO partners need these skills and information to attract continued funding.
- As there is a shortage of NGO staff with strong technical skills, USAID and other donors should find ways to continue technical training for SO staff so that they can stay ahead of the technical needs of their clients as they move toward more sustainable, and fundable programs.
- As part of its push for better results documentation, DemNet should require that SOs report against the results indicators in their logical frameworks. They should take the leadership and work with the NGOs that have databases to assure that those systems are compatible and can generate data on changes in the NGO sector in the regions. They should work with the regional NGOs to monitor basic changes in the sector and the region.
- DemNet should review its reporting requirements and hold SOs to higher standards of reporting including expecting reports to include analytic discussions and logical framework indicators of results.
- DemNet should develop and distribute materials on how to do the Institutional Development Framework and Service Quality Review for use by other NGOs.

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) is an independent, nonprofit organization that helps communities in existing and emerging democracies solve problems while building a better future for themselves and the world. ISC gives communities, and the organizations that support them, training, advice, and the grants they need to solve their own problems and shape their own destiny.

To improve the appropriateness, effectiveness, and permanence of the work, all ISC projects are designed and carried out with local partner organizations. By working through partners, ISC is able to multiply the benefits of programs.

DemNet in Bulgaria is one of ISC's premier programs. Started in 1995, its overall aim is to promote the active engagement of citizens in public policy development and decisionmaking. The program is funded by USAID/Bulgaria through a Cooperative Agreement with ISC.

In the ISC/Bulgaria program, priority is placed on increasing the capacity of civil society organizations, to contribute to strengthening democracy. NGOs are essential players in the process as they provide a mechanism by which ordinary citizens can participate in identifying and influencing public policy.¹

During the first phase of DemNet (1995-98), ISC assisted 124 NGO projects in Bulgaria to strengthen their service delivery, management and governance systems, and develop their capacity to advocate for change in public policy.

The second phase (1998-2002) of DemNet represents a shift in the relationship between ISC and the NGOs. Rather than delivering services directly to NGOs, as in the first phase, DemNet now provides services through one of 13 partner Support Organizations (SOs). The aim of the project is to strengthen the SOs capability to provide the NGO sector with needed services and funding. At the end of the program, the SOs are expected to become sustainable, viable resources to the Bulgarian NGO community. DemNet's partner SOs fall into one or more of the four following types:

- § Grantmaking and resource mobilization
- § Training and technical assistance
- § Research and policy analysis
- § Information sharing and networking

The services the organizations offer overlap as most offer training and information sharing as part of their overall package of services. Below is a table listing the SOs and the services they provide.

¹ The Center for Social Practices published *Civil Society and Sustainable Development: Non-governmental organizations and development in the new century* while this assessment was underway. It is an excellent overview of the NGO sector in Bulgaria. They estimate that in 1999 there were about 4,500 registered NGOs of which about 600-700 carry out visible programs (p.23).

The DemNet Support Organizations

Training:

Agency for Regional Development and Business Center- Vidin (ARDBC)
Bulgarian Media Coalition (BMC)
Democratic Citizens Coalition (DCC)

Grants

Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation (BCAF)
Resource Center Foundation (RCF)
Open Society Club – Rousse (OSC-Rousse)
Open Society Club – Varna (OSC-Varna)
TIME Ecoprojects Foundation (TIME)

Information sharing and networking

NGO Center- Kardjali (NGOC)
Regional Agency for Social and Economic Development (RASED)

Policy and Advocacy

Center for Social Practices (CSP)
Center for Economic Development Foundation (CED)
Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS)

This report covers an assessment of the quality of the services of the DemNet SOs to their NGO clients. The assessment did not address the quality of services DemNet has provided to the SOs. It should also be pointed out that most of the SOs provide services that are funded by other donors and those services were not part of this assessment. For example, several also offer loans and other services to small businesses.

The conceptual background for the research is in the Assessment Framework. It is designed to look at the systems that support effective service delivery including how the SOs ascertain client needs, design services, and improve outreach to target NGOs. The assessment also looks at service monitoring and evaluation and project results.

An important part of the assessment is a review of the capacity of client NGOs to articulate their needs and access services. The assessment looked at whether NGOs are taking advantage of services currently available and whether the services available are those needed to be effective in serving their constituencies.

2.0 CONTEXT FOR THE SERVICE QUALITY ASSESSMENT

DemNet has undertaken three activities designed to strengthen the 13 partner SOs and increase the probability that they and their programs will survive after DemNet closes in 2002. The three-part approach to capacity building aims to leave behind SOs that are building their organizational capacity to deliver services, have international standards of accounting, and are delivering services that respond to the needs of other civil society organizations in Bulgaria.

The first activity initiated was an institutional strengthening program that used a self-assessment methodology called the Institutional Development Framework (IDF)². The tool, introduced at a workshop and facilitated with individual SOs by local consultants, covers all aspects of organizational management including financial and program management. Most of the SOs have completed it twice and separate reports are available that describe the process and results. Based on the SOs' self-identified

² The IDF tool was developed for DemNet by Mark Renzi of Management Systems International.

needs, DemNet provided training, technical assistance and in some cases, additional funding to strengthen the organization.

A second activity, undertaken in June 2001, was an external financial and management audit³ of all SOs to help them achieve international standards of accounting and be able to respond to the reporting requirements of donors such as USAID. SOs were assisted in preparing for the audit, and then received follow-up technical assistance after receiving their audit reports.

A Service Quality Review, undertaken between August 2001 and April, 2002, is the third part of the capacity building strategy for DemNet. Consultants carried out the assessment of the SOs and with DemNet staff debriefed over the results and recommendations.

3.0 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

The assessment objectives are three-fold: to provide a current picture of the quality of service of DemNet partners, to document the results of the activities, and to suggest improvements to SO services. Specifically, the methodology is designed to answer questions in the following areas:

- § Service Delivery— Are the services delivered by SOs to NGOs having any impact? Are the services delivered effectively? Are the systems in place in both SOs and NGOs for the impact to be felt and measured? Are the NGOs effectively reaching their target groups? Does the SO deliver services to the NGO that meet critical needs and make their organization and work more effective?
- § Transparency— Are the SOs transparent in their processes of selecting grantees or participants in their services?
- § Monitoring and evaluation—Do the SOs have monitoring data that demonstrate they are having the desired impact on their NGO partners and their clients? Do they have data on results? Do they use data to make decisions about their work? Is there evidence that the SO considers costs when designing a service and knows which services are most cost effective in producing results?
- § Sustainability—How can SOs improve their service delivery effectiveness to assure the sustainability of these NGOs?
- § Lessons Learned—What are the successes and lessons learned with regard to service delivery?

4.0 METHODOLOGY FOR THE SERVICE QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The initial Quality Assessment Framework was developed jointly by William Ploog, Evaluation and Research Director at ISC/Vermont and Plamen Dimitrov, Program Manager for Organizational Strengthening and Monitoring at ISC/Bulgaria and took place during the last half of 2001. Shirley Buzzard, a consultant from Washington, DC was invited to be team leader and joined in a more detailed planning session in Vermont in July with Dr. Ploog and Dr. Dimitrov. Based on the preliminary methodology, Dr. Dimitrov returned to Bulgaria to begin phase one of the research.

Phase one was a desk study of the reports filed by SOs to DemNet during the second phase of the project. This work was undertaken by ten local consultants, each of whom has extensive experience with the third sector in Bulgaria. The consultants were assigned one or more SOs and provided with a complete file of all proposals, work plans, reports, and other documentation in the DemNet files. The consultant was asked to review the documentation for answers to the service quality questions above.

Phase Two of the study took place during September and October. Dr. Buzzard spent three weeks in Bulgaria working with the consultants to refine the indicators that formed the basis for the interviews and observations during fieldwork. Each of the consultants developed a methodology for the SO. While the

³ The audit was carried out by KPMG/Bulgaria.

specific methodology for each SO varied, each consultant carried out interviews with senior SO staff and board members and observed SO events if any were scheduled during October. They visited the NGOs who depend on the SOs for grants, training, information, and other services that fulfill DemNet's objective of promoting the active engagement of citizens in public policy development and decisionmaking. While in the field, they also spoke with a range of other stakeholders including local government, civic leaders, and unsuccessful grant applicants.

Consultants were provided with tools such as guidance on how to conduct interviews and focus groups, the Strategic Thinking Quiz, and a Customer Satisfaction Survey that were translated into Bulgarian and provided electronically so that the consultants could modify them. Each used these tools in different ways. In all, about 200 people were interviewed for the assessment and a complete list of those interviewed is included in each of the consultant's reports.

After the consultants carried out the field work in October, Dr. Buzzard returned to Bulgaria in early November and facilitated a two-day data analysis session based on the reports⁴ the consultants had written about the assigned SO. The objective of the session was to answer the quality assessment questions, develop overall conclusions, and offer recommendations for improving the services of the SOs that form the basis for this report. The session gave consultants an opportunity to compare their findings and discuss common themes and issues.

Following completion of this study, ISC held feedback meetings with SO and consultants to communicate key findings of the audits and the SQR and help them set specific learning objectives for the remainder of the project. ISC/Bulgaria staff report that the SOs found the process to be helpful, timely, and helped them develop aggressive, short term plans for strengthening their systems and making them more sustainable.

5.0 DEFINITION OF QUALITY SERVICE

For purposes of this study, quality service means that the organization:

- § Is customer oriented, knows what their customers need and want, and that they are meeting those needs.
- § Thinks strategically about the future needs of its clients and is creating a demand for new information.
- § Has information showing that the organization is moving in positive directions.
- § Provides services that are timely and appropriate.
- § Has mechanisms by which NGOs have some role in the SO's operations including customer surveys, feedback, and the participation of NGO representatives in meetings, planning, or evaluation activities.

6.0 STUDY RESULTS

The following information is a summary of the 13 consultant's reports. Those reports formed the basis for discussions at the two-day data analysis session attended by the consultants and DemNet program staff.

6.1 SERVICE DELIVERY

The study looked at four elements of service delivery: the SO's perception of and attitude towards its customers, the demand for services, the sensitivity to local needs, and the agility to change, and reported customer satisfaction.

⁴ The individual SO reports are available on request. The reports also contain recommendations for the SO. The consultant and DemNet staff debriefed each SO over the findings during December. The specific methodology used by each consultant is also in those reports.

The quality of services delivered by the SOs was found to be quite high. While they do not have a business-like attitude, they are sensitive to the constantly changing political and economic situation in Bulgaria and the citizens of the country are very eager to join together to bring about change and solve local problems. The consultants found that the NGOs and citizens in general are so eager for additional information on how to organize and where to raise money for their projects, they are an uncritical audience. There continues to be a large unmet need in Bulgaria for support to civil society organizations.

Attitudes towards Customers

At this point in time, there is so much demand for SO services that there is no sense of competition between them and no need to develop programs nuanced to the specific needs of a target group. SOs feel that they know the needs of the NGOs and offer them a package of grants and training that is well received. The SOs do not think of themselves as businesses and therefore do not think of the groups they work with as customers or clients. SO human and financial services are currently stretched to provide generic services and do not have the resources to target specific market segments.

The absence of a customer orientation results from three factors. First, as there are few organizations in Bulgaria providing the civil society support services that the SOs provide, they do not have a competitive attitude. Second, with few exceptions, SOs do not sell their services so they do not have an entrepreneurial approach to their services. Finally, the SOs are relatively new and still in the process of stabilization.

At the same time, the organizations do have an increasingly clear perception of the groups with whom they work and their specific needs. For example, ARDBC targets new and small NGOs in Vidin, Montana, Vratza districts. As there are few established NGOs in the area, they are particularly sensitive to the special needs of start-up organizations. Resource Center Foundation and BCAF have nation-wide programs and DCC, OSC-Rousse, and OSC-Varna have multi-regional programs and therefore must respond to a wider range of needs.

The SOs are reported to have a service attitude and make a point of going out of their offices to visit the communities where NGOs work and interact with them on an equal level. They think of DemNet as a supportive and helpful donor. As their work has progressed, the SOs have become more familiar with their NGO partners and in most cases have modified their training and other activities to be more responsive to their needs. They have learned that the very new and small community groups need very simple and basic information while the more established groups are ready for slightly more technical skills and information.

The three research institutes (CED, CSP and IRIS) present a somewhat different case than the community development organizations in that they think of their donors as their main clients. They do research or projects on a contract basis with a variety of donors and clients.

Demand for Services and Customer Satisfaction

There is a very high level of demand for SO services, particularly in those areas outside of Sofia. At this point, there is such a demand for more information and so few sources, the customers tend not to be very demanding of the quality of the services. As one consultant pointed out, people new to civil society activities often do not know their own needs.

The NGOs are very pleased with SO services and activities. While the SOs rely on informal needs assessments and feedback, they all feel that they are in very close contact with their customers, know their needs, and are regularly adapting their services to meet those needs. Interviews with the customers show they are highly appreciative of all services and are eager for more meetings, training, and other tools to help them formalize their organizations, raise funds, and achieve their social or economic objectives.

There is also very high level of satisfaction among the NGOs with regard to the SO programs and services. There is a great demand for more information on how to get organized, attract funding, and

manage a nonprofit. Participants evaluated all the activities presented by the SOs very positively. People gain a lot from participating in the meetings just from the informal interaction and opportunity to meet with others working in the third sector. The meetings provide a much-needed sense of support for those who are working in isolated areas and do not have much contact with other NGOs. The NGOs outside of Sofia ask for more meetings and opportunities to exchange ideas and build a professional support network.

Although in Bulgaria there is a general cynicism that most systems are corrupt, this study found no indication of this feeling among the clients of the grantmaking organizations. Grant recipients report that SOs are very supportive and the unsuccessful applicants are briefed on the shortcomings of their proposals so, even among unsuccessful grant applicants, there is a sense of fairness and openness in the process. DemNet has been a model of transparency in its work and the consultants reported no complaints about unfairness in the SOs services.

The SOs try to do as much as they can with limited resources. The regional organizations are trying to expand to serve new regions and add new training and information services as the need is identified. As the participants in the events are unsophisticated consumers, they are satisfied with programs that may not be of the highest quality. In all cases, the SOs have emphasized quantity over quality, efficiency over effectiveness. They would rather reach more people than deliver the highest quality services. The consultants expressed concern that the SOs may have created more demand than they can satisfy with current resource levels. At this stage of the development of the NGO community in smaller towns, this may be appropriate. As the NGOs become stronger, they will need and expect services with stronger technical input and more effective delivery mechanisms but for now, they are happy to have any information.

Sensitivity to Changing Conditions and Agility to Change

There is ample evidence that the SOs are sensitive to changes in conditions in Bulgaria and to the needs of their NGO clients. They have a good balance between flexibility and the ability to follow their work plans. BCAF, for example has made substantial changes in its grant program. They started with a system of regional quotas and after the first round of grants, realized that a quota system was not appropriate and eliminated it. They made a number of changes in the proposal process and in the way they select their grantees. They have requested, and received, additional funds from DemNet for a special study of unsuccessful grantees to assure themselves that they are not overlooking potentially important projects. DemNet has been supportive of these changes and, where appropriate, provided additional funds.

DCC originally targeted NGOs that work with youth and those that work on behalf of the disabled. They soon realized that there were not many groups that target youth and that the disabled have difficulty traveling to their events. They now offer training and technical assistance to all community groups and are working with them to integrate youth and the disabled into existing NGOs. Both OSC- Rousse and OSC-Varna are in close touch with their clients on a daily basis and offer new training and assistance as needed. All the grantmakers have made the proposal writing process, particularly budgets, easier based on feedback.

The most important change for Bulgarian NGOs is recent legislation that requires all NGOs to re-register as public benefit or mutual benefit nonprofits. With support from DemNet and other NGOs that focus on legal issues, particularly RCF, most of the SOs sponsored training and informational sessions are on the new law, how to re-register, and the implications of the law.

The research and information sharing organizations, BMC and TIME/ Bluelink and RCF all must identify emerging trends or policies in order to carry out research, organize task forces, and prepare and disseminate information. They are an important source of information for other SOs, NGOs, government officials and other researchers. They all have web-sites and publications that are continually updated and used frequently by those NGOs with web-access.

Appropriateness of Programs to Local Needs and Resources

The program has clearly responded to the needs of individual citizens but also has been an effective partner with local government in resolving problems. While the regional SOs are responding to the needs of the start-up organizations, those in Sofia have been more focused on established organizations. As there are very few NGO support activities in Vidin, Kardjali, and Haskovo other than those provided by the DemNet SOs, they have created and are responding to a hunger for more information. There is a growing demand for information on how citizens can organize to resolve problems of employment, opportunities for ethnic minorities (particularly the Roma and Turks), people with disabilities, tourism, and environmental problems.

It is noteworthy how many of the SOs and NGOs have formed effective partnerships with municipal authorities to work on problems. Local governments have very limited resources and in some cases now see the SOs and NGOs as a major resource for doing problem analysis, raising funds, and implementing projects. Working together has not only enabled both to do more with scarce resources, it has introduced a new way of thinking. ARDBC in Vidin reports strong cooperation with local government. BCAF requires a 30 percent contribution from local resources for its grantees projects which demonstrates that the need is recognized by local authorities. The SOs all reports a very high demand for services and substantial in-kind and volunteer resource contributions.

Local government officials in Rousse believe that the NGO movement has introduced a new form of public participation. OSC-Varna has worked with local government to develop tourism, work out a city development plan and do a survey of people with special needs. RASED and ARDBC/Vidin both use municipal space for business incubators and information centers.

6.2 TRANSPARENCY

The data shows that the SOs are considered by NGOs to be transparent in their processes. There were no reports of perceived unfairness. Among the grantmaking organizations, both groups that received grants and those that were unsuccessful felt the SOs systems were consistent and open. The grantmaking organizations have clear guidelines on how to apply for grants, procedures for selecting grants, and most monitor grantees effectively. They provide individual technical assistance in the preparation of proposals and debrief with those that are unsuccessful. The grantmaking organizations meet periodically to share ideas on how to make their systems even more fair and open.

6.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There are two elements of monitoring and evaluation. First is the extent to which the SOs are learning organizations, seeking to improve the way they deliver their services and, second, the extent to which they monitor the results of their work in the communities. The research found that the SOs are generally strong as learning organizations but need additional work on program monitoring.

Support Organizations as Learning Organizations

Any discussion of the SOs as learning organizations needs to be viewed in the context of Bulgarian culture where people are very sensitive to criticism. Few people or organizations are willing to admit that there is any shortcoming in their work, which makes it very hard for the SOs to ask for help or accept it graciously. DemNet staff have been frustrated in feeling that they have been willing and able to provide more organizational assistance than the SOs were willing to accept. There is a tendency to blame all problems on a lack of resources, rather than a lack of skills or technique. While DemNet has been able to provide a great deal of organizational development in addition to funding, it has taken some patience on the part of DemNet to provide the support in a nonthreatening way. This has improved over time with increasing readiness of SOs to seek DemNet support as trust has grown.

The organizations interviewed feel that the situation for civil society in Bulgaria is so unpredictable, donors' whims so capricious, and the general funding system so based on political connections rather than merit, they cannot plan further than the limit of their current grants.

The SOs take different approaches to self-evaluation and learning. The research institutes, BMC and TIME/Bluelink see themselves as professional organizations with a different organizational culture than the community development organizations. They hold regular staff meetings to plan activities and discuss new initiatives but do not have routine self-assessment sessions. TIME/Bluelink holds an annual retreat to review its accomplishments and set goals for the next year.

Four of the five grantmaking organizations (BCAF, TIME Foundation, OSC-Rousse and OSC-Varna) are highly process oriented and have routine self-assessment programs not only for their grant programs but also for the supporting services available to potential and actual grantees. BCAF, for example, has a staff retreat three times per year. The five grantmaking organizations have met to discuss their process and procedures and coordinate their work.

At least six of the SOs are creating databases of NGOs. CSP, for example, has a database of 140 NGOs with basic information on their programs. The grantmakers are tracking grant performance. It would be a service to all the SOs, and to the NGO community, if the databases were coordinated and interlinked.

Trainers from the SOs interact with each other informally and share ideas or co-train. They have expressed a need for an ongoing program to develop their training skills and perhaps form a professional association, but no organization has taken the leadership on this. DCC has quarterly meetings of trainers to discuss ways to improve their training and develop new workshops as part of their on-going training of trainers program.

A third group of SOs are so new or small they do not have a systematic program of self-reflection, relying instead on informal discussions and intuition. ARDBC-Vidin recognizes the need for more organizational learning but they do not consider self-analysis a priority use of their time. The NGO Center/Kardjali is new and small has been too preoccupied with startup to put any self-learning systems to be in place. RFC reports that it relies on a competent staff and information technology for the organizational learning it needs. RASED-Haskovo and NGO Center - Kardjali are both new and lack systematic self-assessment.

The DemNet SOs have a sense of camaraderie. They attend each others' events, go to each other for information, and use their combined contacts with the NGO community to collect and disseminate information. For some SO staff, this is the only skill development opportunity they have. It has been suggested that future grants have line items for staff development and that SOs could benefit from formal staff development programs.

The SOs use the data they have for making decisions. That information is limited to budgets and financial reports, work plans, end-of-event reports and informal information from their staff's contacts through the telephone, email and meetings. In the absence of results data and accurate costing of activities (including labor and overhead costs) they cannot do effective cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis.

One of the tools provided to the consultants was the Strategic Thinking Quiz. This tool was used by some of the consultants as a mechanism for provoking discussion or as a way to close out the interviews. They found the quiz to be a very helpful way to quantify the extent to which the SOs are thinking ahead.⁵ Most of those who took the quiz scored above 70 points though the consultants felt that they tended to over-rate themselves, typical for a self-assessment tool. In general the SOs who took the quiz felt that they are in touch with their clients, know the local situation, and are responding to changing needs. The two areas where all the SO staff who took the quiz scored "no" were in their ability to foresee the future

⁵ The consultants found the Strategic Thinking Quiz a useful tool for introducing the concept of Service Quality Review or for wrapping up their series of interviews and observations. Several of the SOs asked for copies of the quiz to use with their staff or with NGOs.

needs of their clients and their knowledge of the financial situation of their clients. This was despite the fact that the grantmakers all require a financial statement from potential grantees. The “no” answer on this question is further evidence that the SOs and NGOs are not thinking in business terms. Although they report that they do not know their clients’ financial situation, they believe those clients would be unwilling or unable to pay fees for services.

One of the tools that DemNet introduced to the SOs was an organizational self-assessment tool developed by MSI International. Most of the SOs have completed the Institutional Development Framework (IDF) twice. With facilitation by local consultants, the tool has been a very helpful way for the SOs to think about their organizational capacity and identify areas where they need improvement. Based on the tool, DemNet has provided additional funds, training, or consulting to help strengthen areas needing improvement.

There have also been a number of requests for the IDF by local businesses, schools, and community organizations. The tool, whether it is used as a formal self-assessment or just a background piece, provides prospective organizations with an understanding of the elements that go into the management of a successful nonprofit.

Results Monitoring

The SOs do very limited results and no impact monitoring of their work. Most do an adequate job of complying with their work plan, monitoring activities, and tracking levels of participation. The consultants felt SO reports to DemNet lacked analytic details and recommended that DemNet hold the SOs to higher reporting standards than they have in the past. DemNet has recently revised its guidelines for quarterly reports from the SOs and in some cases does send reports back for revision if they are considered inadequate. The consultants found the quarterly reports to DemNet are mainly a list of activities carried out during the quarter, number of participants, and financial reports and lacked results data or analysis of what is working and what is not.

Reports may describe some subjective assessment of the success of an activity but they do not report against result or impact objectives. While all the SOs have been trained in the use of the logical framework and have log frames on file, they do not report against it and DemNet has accepted activity rather than results reports. Although DemNet held two workshops on monitoring and evaluation, they report only one request (from OSC-Rousse in 2001) for additional training or technical assistance on monitoring and evaluation.

There are two uses for monitoring data. First, they need this information to promote the organization's reputation and attract other donors. Second, they need this information to improve their internal systems and make activities of the organization more effective.

The three research organizations and the BMC are reported make the best use of their activities for marketing their organizations to the public. These four organizations have been effective in marketing their organizations even in the absence of results or impact data. With the other SOs, the consultants identified a number of specific outcomes, results and new initiatives that can be credited to the SOs but staff see report writing, documentation, and monitoring as a poor use of their time. To be sure, the organizations are all operating on minimal budgets, are understaffed, and do have limited resources but it is more than just a lack of time. They do not understand self-promotion and why recording successes is essential to future fund-raising success.

The BMC, a media organization, produces reports over their activities, and compares their accomplishments with their targets. TIME/Bluelink is an advocacy organization but neither BMC nor TIME/Bluelink take credit for the legislative and policy changes of which they have been part. TIME/Bluelink has been involved in a number of successful environmental legislative activities but they do not seem to know how to use their successes to market them. RCF was a leader in the development of new NGO legislation but has not made this a marketing issue.

The three research SOs (CED, CSP, and IRIS) do not attempt to monitor the results or impact of their work. They are fairly sophisticated organizations with considerable technology so that they do monitor the number of people who participate in their events, visit their web sites, order publications, and other activities. As think tanks, they respond to donors requests for research and coordinate task forces or work groups on specific issues. They measure success by their ability to attract new funding, the level of publicity their events attract, sales of their publications, and visits to their web-sites. CED, for example, has a public relations person who writes reports and releases information to the media.

Using monitoring information to improve internal processes is also important. Because participants are so hungry for information and are so eager to attend any meeting, end of workshop and end of event evaluations tend to be uniformly very positive though the forms tend ask very general questions with YES/NO answers. Few of the SOs have developed evaluation forms that are truly useful to them and this may be one reason some SOs do little with them. Those organizations, such as OSC/Varna and DCC, that have developed participatory or qualitative end-of-event evaluations, have made the best use of them to improve their services. TIME has also developed a useful end-of-training evaluation form that has produced information useful for improving the activity.

At least four of the five grantmaking organizations have systems for monitoring the subgrantees compliance with work plans and budgets. BCAF staff, for example, visit each grantee at the beginning of the grant and then hire external evaluators to visit in the middle and the end of the project. They complete standard questionnaires about the project and the progress of each grantee is discussed in meetings. Additional technical assistance is given if a grant is experiencing problems. OSC-Varna has a five-person monitoring team that visits each project to write a progress report and offer assistance. The only grantmaking SO lacking a rigorous system for monitoring grant performance against work plans and budgets is RCF. While they do have a questionnaire that is supposed to be completed by staff during visits to the projects, in many cases the visits do not occur until the end of the grant or the grantee completes the form. All of the grantmaking organizations offer training to potential grantees on program planning and proposal writing.

The networking and training organizations are mixed in their use of activities data. All keep track of their activities and the number of people who participate. All the SOs do some end-of-workshop or end-of-event participant evaluations but the quality of the forms and the use of these materials is quite mixed. The more process oriented SOs such as DCC, BCAF, BMC, RCF and OSC-Varna, and OSC-Rousse discuss the evaluations in meetings and make changes in the content or presentation the next time.

The SOs and their NGO partners tend not to think in terms of results or impact in the community, for them the objective is an activity. DemNet has not pushed them on results monitoring and they see reporting, documentation, and record keeping as a distraction from their more important work as service providers. Because many are small and, for the most part, very close to their clients, they feel they have an intuitive or qualitative sense of what is working and what activities have the greatest effect.

Most of the SOs do a fair job of keeping track of their activities and their money though they do no analysis of the financial data by program. While ARDBC-Vidin, DCC, NGOC-Kardjali, and RCF do not appear to use even output data in their decisionmaking in any formal way, BCAF, OSC-Rousse, OSC-Varna, and TIME/Bluelink do use data from activities to do informal evaluations and to gauge the demand for their services.

In the absence of results or impact targets, and without accurate cost data for activities, it is not possible for the SOs to do cost-benefit analysis of their work. They are (with the exception of the research organizations) small and work with limited resources so they are very conscious of making their money go as far as possible. There is no evidence of any cost analysis that includes the cost of labor and overhead for SO activities.

The recent KPMG audit also shows that the SOs fail to keep accurate track of in-kind contributions and volunteer labor. Since there is anecdotal evidence that municipalities and citizens are contributing time and non-monetary resources, these need to be tracked.

6.4 SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the services is one of the most serious concerns of DemNet and the SOs. There are four main constraints to the sustainability of SO programs: first, the dependence on donor funding; second, the lack of results data and documentation that might attract new donors to Bulgaria; third, the shortage of good technical skills among the NGO community; and fourth, the short term-thinking of donors.

The environment for NGOs in Bulgaria is a very difficult one as they are totally dependent on a few international donors, several of whom have plans to close out their programs in Bulgaria or reduce their support for NGOs. The tax laws in Bulgaria actually penalize businesses for making contributions and there is no incentive for individuals to make donations. There is no history of personal contributions to worthy causes. Some of the SOs are able to raise about one percent of their revenue through donations, fees for services, and business contributions.

BCAF has an innovative program of payroll deductions in 60 businesses and 12 state enterprises. The contributions are still quite small as salaries are very low but it does represent an innovative approach to raising local funds. BCAF estimates that it might be able to leverage up to 30 percent of its income from fees and other local resources though the consultant felt this was optimistic.

There is no evidence that the SOs have more donors than they did when DemNet started. A table showing the current list of donors is displayed below. While DemNet and several of the SOs have done training on how to prepare proposals to donors, most of them are too busy to do the strategic thinking, networking, and writing that are required to present a proposal to a major donor. There is the impression that most SO and NGO staff are so busy and over-extended trying to implement their current grants, they do not put much time into thinking and planning for future funding.

Despite the difficult environment, the SOs and NGOs have made an effort to leverage local resources including; the use of in-kind contributions (office space, training facilities), donated products from businesses (food for events), and the use of volunteers. The recent audit, however, made it clear that the SOs do not do an adequate job of tracking or valuing these non-monetary contributions. There are no standards in Bulgaria with regard to how to value an hour of volunteer time or what value to place on a donated meeting room.

Several of the SOs and NGOs have Peace Corps Volunteers who provide additional human resources that are invaluable in a small organization. Others have university students or international volunteers. None of the organizations place a monetary value on the volunteer's services for accounting purposes.

While the research and policy analysis organizations have some products for sale such as publications or newsletters and BMC has a CD-ROM, none of the community development SOs has undertaken income producing activities such as the sale of handicrafts or other products or services that would subsidize their social service programs. Nor have any of the groups provided services to the public using a sliding scale so that more affluent customers can subsidize the services to the less affluent. They believe that operating such a business in Bulgaria would not work.

The dependence on donor funding may have limited the creativity of the SOs in that they must respond to donor objectives and the donors are highly risk-adverse, unwilling to fund projects that are experimental or creative.

The prospect for sustainability of the SOs and their programs is mixed. The larger, more sophisticated organizations, particularly CED and RCF, are established organizations with close ties to a variety of potential donors. BMC, by contrast, is highly dependent on USAID funding.

The research organizations and some of the other SOs are highly personality dependent, being founded by dynamic, charismatic leaders. There is always the danger that they will ally themselves with the wrong political factions or the leader will no longer be able to lead the organizations. In the development of nonprofits there is the well-known “founders syndrome” where the charismatic leader who starts and organization is unable to make the shift from a personalized organization to a professionally managed organization with shared leadership. The research organizations are all at high risk of this phenomenon.

Illustrative Table Showing Trends of Support Organization Donors

ARDBC - Vidin	UNDP + Ministry of Labor (JOBS); PHARE “SMSE” (through BARDA) USAID through DemNet/ISC
BCAF	C.S.Mott Foundation; Community Funds – U.K. (ex National Lottery Charities Board); Canada Fund; CAF; USAID through DemNet/ISC
BMC	USAID through IREX/ProMedia; USAID through NDI; USAID through DemNet/ISC
CED	World Bank; European Bank for Construction and Development; USAID; World Economic Forum; Center for International Private Enterprise- Washington; Delegation of EU Commission to Bulgaria; Open Society Foundation – Sofia; Open Society Institute – New York; USAID through MSI-Sofia; German Society for Technical Cooperation; The Starr Foundation; Freedom House – Budapest; Harvard Institute for International Development; USAID through DemNet/ISC
CSP	Center for International Private Enterprises -Washington; Search for Common Ground – Macedonia; Open Society Foundation – Sofia; German Marshal Fund – Washington; Freedom House – Budapest; USAID through Coalition 2000/Center for the Study of Democracy – Sofia; USAID through DemNet/ISC
DCC	EU Commission-Strasbourg; Phare-Lien; Department of Internal Development (ex- British Know-how Fund) USAID through DemNet/ISC.
IRIS	Freedom House – Budapest; Freedom House – New York; German Marshal Fund – Berlin; Open Society Foundation – Sofia; USAID through DemNet/ISC
NGO Center-Kardjali	Open Society Foundation – Sofia; Municipal premises; USAID through DemNet/ISC
OSC-Rousse	C.S.Mott Foundation; Health Foundation Draifuss – US; Open Society Foundation – Sofia; USAID through DemNet/ISC
SC-Varna	C.S.Mott Foundation; Open Society Foundation – Sofia; Open Society Institute –New York; PHARE; UNDP; Local Resources mobilized; USAID through DemNet/ISC
RCF	Charity Know How; Canadian Embassy – Bucharest; Democracy Commission - US Embassy, Sofia; International Center for Non-Profit Laws; Ministry of Defence - The Netherlands; Ministry of Foreign Affairs - The Netherlands; National Center for Non-Profit Boards – Washington; Norway Government; Open Society Institute –New York; Open Society Institute – Budapest; Open Society Foundation – Sofia; UK Government; USAID; USAID through DemNet/ISC
RASED-	PHARE; German Technical Cooperation; Municipal premises; USAID through DemNet/ISC
TIME	Democracy Commission – US Embassy,Sofia; UNDP; Waste Prevention Association 3R - Poland; USAID through DemNet/ISC

BMC is the SO with the greatest sustainability risk as they are heavily dependent on USAID funding. Despite substantial pressure from DemNet, they have not attracted other donors. The consultant felt that they could charge fees for some of their services and products and they, along with the other SOs, can do

better at tracking in-kind and volunteer contributions. As their work is unique, effective, and important they should be able to attract a broader range of donors but will need to invest the time in proposal writing.

There is a serious shortage of skilled NGO staff in Bulgaria. The SOs and NGOs experience high staff turnover as people find other jobs in the private sector or go overseas for advanced degrees. Among the smaller SOs, whenever a staff member is gone due to illness, training, or other reasons, it places a strain on those still in the office. The SOs lack systematic programs for staff skills development and for training new staff. The only exception is DCC's on-going program of training of trainers which has been effective. There are no on-going programs of technical skills development with a series of learning events that builds on the past. One-time workshops are generally not enough to really improve technical skills.

The sustainability of the programs for the five grantmaking organizations will face a more difficult future. At this time, there are two other NGOs in Bulgaria that make grants to NGOs. Unless OSC-Rousse, OSC-Varna, and BCAF can find another multi- or bi-lateral donor that wants to take advantage of their expertise in subgranting, this element of their programs is likely to end and the 150 NGOs that have received subgrants from them will likely suffer. RCF has already jeopardized its grantmaking program by undertaking programs of its own that put it in competition with its own grantees and in a questionable ethical position.

The training and information sharing organizations will likely continue but many of their programs may be curtailed unless they can attract other donors. They do have the advantage of working in underserved areas and with ethnic minorities that may make them attractive to other donors.

There is a serious problem of short-term thinking throughout the sector. It is well known that community-based programs are likely to take at least ten years to bear significant results, be self-managed, and sustainable. Donors, in their efforts to spread funds among the NGOs tend not to fund successful follow-on or replication activities. DemNet's grantmakers tell their grantees not to apply for second grants so they can reach more organizations. DemNet's long term commitment to the SOs has been a welcome exception. The SOs are highly grateful for DemNet's long term commitment to their programs.

The SOs have had limited success in forming partnerships with business, government, international organizations, and universities that could lead to more funding. While they participate in each others' activities, none of the SOs have collaborated on a joint proposal or fundraising initiative. The research organizations have been most successful in forming partnerships with European organizations. CSP is a partner with the New Bulgarian University giving it access to students and volunteers. TIME has an ongoing partnership with BlueLink to provide the electronic communication for TIME's environmental programs. DCC is a partnership of six members of the Association of the Open Education Centers and is highly successful in working together.

6.5 LESSONS LEARNED

DemNet works to carry out USAID's Strategic Objective of increasing the participation of citizens in public policy discussions. Neither the SOs nor the NGOs have systems for monitoring the outcomes, results, or impact of their work. For this reason, there is no quantitative data to demonstrate the achievement of the objective.

Despite the absence of project monitoring data, there is strong anecdotal evidence that the project has increased citizen participation in a number of ways. Taken as a whole, the consultants' reports show a changed way of thinking in small towns and rural areas, an increasing partnership between local government and citizens groups, and a number of small successes that collectively demonstrate that the approach has been effective. To be sure, the NGO community is not yet to the point where it is having a measurable effect on national policy but the elements are in place for that to happen in the next five to ten years.

- Citizens and local government leaders now recognize that they need to organize to solve some of their own problems rather than waiting for the national government to do it. The idea of citizens coming together to discuss problems and their causes and forming strategies for resolving them is new in Bulgaria and it is clearly happening in the regions where the SOs are working. What is called “project thinking” is new in Bulgaria particularly in the smaller towns outside of Sofia.⁶ Bulgaria is a highly educated country with many un- or underemployed people who find NGOs are an outlet for their talents, energies, and interests. It is safe to say there is a blossoming civil society in Bulgaria that is poised for take-off.
- There are dozens of new NGOs forming. Most of these are small and unsophisticated but they are eager for more information on how to develop their organizations, raise money for their cause and for training on how to leverage local resources, and ⁷other information on how they as citizens can solve some local problems. Many of these organizations will die out after a few months but others are growing and becoming stronger. While they currently have limited voice in national public policy, they clearly have an active role in local policies and planning and this is a necessary first step.
- The NGOs have leveraged many volunteers to help with projects from cleaning up a riverfront, repairing a monastery, to engaging in public information campaigns about the environment. The concept of volunteerism is not well developed in Bulgaria so this is a new way for citizens to become involved in their communities.
- The SOs, and through their work the NGOs, have gained confidence in their work and their profession. They have new skills, are more open to sharing and partnering than they were before DemNet. The successful management of a DemNet grant is likely to make the SOs more attractive to other donors.
- The NGOs represent a range of minority and disenfranchised groups. Women are very active and there are NGOs that focus on Roma and Turkish ethnic groups, others that target youth, the disabled, unemployed nurses, and other groups that have not had a voice in community affairs. Some of the five regional SOs were selected as DemNet partners specifically because they had contacts in remote parts and rural parts of the country where there are few civil society groups.
- It is reported that the tools and concepts DemNet presented with its SO partners are trickling down to the NGOs and others. DemNet has treated its SOs as partners, encouraging them to come to DemNet for training, technical assistance, and coaching. In turn the SOs seem to have a very positive relationship with their NGO partners, in turn offering them training, facilitating learning networks, and in some cases, providing them with grants. The Organizational Self-Assessment Tool that the SOs used, is also being used by several of the NGOs, and by some schools, businesses and other organizations in the community.

⁶ With a grant from DemNet, the Center for Social Practices undertook a study “Civil Involvement in Public Policy and Local Development” to document of the attitudes, motivations, and sentiments among Bulgarian NGOs operating at the local level. They noted that “the very culture of problem solving is changing. Increasingly, when faced with a problem, people no longer think solely in terms of which Ministry’s job it is to tackle the problem. Instead... a meeting of all parties involved... maps out a common strategy for the solution for the problem. (p.11). *Civil Society and Sustainable Development: Non-governmental Organizations and Development in the New Century*. 2001

⁷ “As far as Bulgarian NGOs are concerned, it is noticeable that the offices of such organizations and of business associations (centres) represent the only - and certainly the first - place in small towns where citizens can use Internet and electronic mail. Thus, with their very establishment, NGO offices become natural centers of civil interaction and initiative.” (P.11). *Civil Society and Sustainable Development: Non-governmental Organizations and Development in the New Century*. Center for Social Practices, 2001.

- The DemNet project, through its SOs has created a first-generation of NGO technical staff. At this point, even for the SOs, there is a lot of learning on the job. There is a clear need for continued technical training for SO staff so that they can stay ahead of the technical needs of their clients as they move toward more sustainable, and fundable, programs.
- The SOs have developed a closer relationship with the media as a result of their work with DemNet. BMC offered extensive media training and, through its web site, publicized resources. Additionally, OSC-Varna received substantial media coverage for its events. All of the SOs are more sensitive to the importance of including representatives of the media in their events when appropriate.

6.6 SUMMARY OF SERVICE QUALITY

In summary, the level of service quality of the SOs is what might be expected in a country with an emerging civil society, many social and economic problems, and limited funding. NGOs are operating at all levels of sophistication. There are a few that operate at international standards with highly qualified staff and relatively consistent funding levels. A large number that have offices, a small staff and that struggle continually to upgrade their staff skills, provide services, and make the most of limited resources. And at the community level in small towns and rural areas, hundreds of citizens groups and NGOs are organizing around issues. A few of these will go on to formal registration and outside funding; some will accomplish their task, such as planting trees in a park, and disband. Many will never be able to attract funding for programs.

There is a very high demand for information on how to organize a nonprofit, how to manage it and, most importantly, how to raise money for projects. The demand for information, training, and resources is so great that the NGOs are not discriminating consumers. While the SOs try to improve the quality of their training and other activities, they place responding to needs for information over the provision of higher quality services. In their efforts to serve many different groups and large geographic areas, their effectiveness may have been diluted.

BCAF, DCC, OSC-Rousse, and OSC-Varna are reported to be delivering the highest quality of training and grants. RASED Haskovo and the NGO Center-Kardjali both are new and struggling to improve their services to local NGOs.

The SOs have done a commendable job of starting-up their own organizations and passing on that experience to their NGO partners. They know how to develop a work plan, implement training and networking activities, and use participatory techniques in training. They know how to write simple proposals for funding and write reports describing activities and expenditures against the work plan and budget. These are the skills the emerging NGO community needs.

The SO shortcomings are in their ability to move the NGOs to the next level of sophistication which will involve doing root-cause analysis and designing programs (not just a series of activities) that have behavior change as their objective and that have measurable results objectives. They do not have the skills to do cost-benefit analysis, results monitoring, and to create and use internal management information systems.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- Five of the DemNet SOs have successfully administered subgrants to 117 local NGOs for a total of \$819,462. They have leveraged local resources such as volunteers, partnerships with local municipalities, and in-kind contributions to match an estimated 30 percent of this amount. Administering subgrants strengthened the SOs as organizations and they receive very high ratings for their ability to manage a transparent and effective subgrant process.
- The SOs have worked with hundreds of NGO partners and those working outside of Sofia are

credited with creating a local NGO community in the regions where they work. Despite their efforts, there remains a very high unmet need among local citizens for more information on how to organize to solve problems, how to leverage funds, and to learn from similar groups in other towns.

- While civil society in the regions where the SOs work has not yet reached the point where it has a large role in national policy debate, they are forming very strong partnerships with local government and have an increasing voice in local planning, decisionmaking, and problem solving.
- The SOs are credited with introducing a new way of participation in society that has not been available to citizens in the past. People no longer wait for government to solve problems but are organizing, talking, and collaborating on a wide range of social, environmental, economic, tourism, and ethnic issues. Many people, including women and minorities, are now involved in the emerging NGO community who previously had no role. Volunteerism is new concept in most areas yet community efforts to restore a monastery, clean up a riverfront, or do a survey of people with disabilities has stimulated community involvement to tackle other problems.
- Because the SOs and their NGO partners are so dependent on the whims of various donors funding, they have been very grateful for the sustained financial and technical support they have received from DemNet. DemNet has been a model of participation, transparency, and customer service that the SOs have learned from and are passing on to their partners.
- While the quality of the training and services delivered to the NGOs is not of the highest international standards, there is such a demand for information on how to form and manage an NGO that at this stage, the level of service quality is appropriate to the needs of the clients. The SOs are generally customer-service oriented and the assessment found very few complaints about their services. They have complex but informal relations with NGO partners and get feedback from them in a variety of ways.
- As the NGO community moves to the next generation, the SOs will need to develop higher quality services for which they can charge a fee. They will also need to develop new skills in strategic program development, results monitoring, and more sophisticated financial tools.
- With smaller NGOs and municipal governments, the project concept is new and has provided a way for people to think about problems and their solutions. The opportunity to participate in civic organizations organized around a cause or issue has given people a new way to participate in society.
- The newer/smaller NGOs have become more active as a result of their contact with the DemNet SOs. They seek out training, are more aware of their own needs, and are more active in seeking funding than they would have been without DemNet.
- There is a need for more very simple print documentation of successful program activities and how-to manuals for people outside of Sofia who do not have access to such information and do not have computers.
- There is limited data on the impact from the project, largely because the SOs do not report against results or impact and because there is little documentation. There is anecdotal evidence that the project has had a substantial impact on the way people think about problems and their solutions but these stories have not been written. The SOs and NGOs do not know how to market their successes to attract more funding.
- None of the SOs or NGOs has results reporting and even input-output reporting is uneven. NGO staff members tend to see writing and record keeping as a poor use of their time. While they attribute this to a lack of time, a good management information system saves time and money. There needs to be a shift in attitude as well as new skills.

- In general, the SOs and NGOs have tried to leverage local resources such as using local facilities for offices or training, using volunteers, and charging a small fee for some services. These resources are not well documented.
- Some NGOs would be willing to pay for some services but many are very small, have no offices and have no full time staff so paying is not possible.
- There is an increasing credibility among the NGO community and particularly in small towns, local officials see NGOs as partners in resolving local social and economic problems.
- The SOs do not have formal self-learning mechanisms though most have staff meetings or retreats and some are using the OD self-assessment that DemNet introduced. They are aware that they should be doing more but they see time as a constraint.
- It is hard for NGOs in Bulgaria to plan ahead. The political and economic environment is such that most organizations cannot focus beyond the immediate funding. On the STQ, one of the questions most often answered “no” was projecting what the needs of their clients will be in the future.
- There is a reticence to sharing information about money. ISC/Bulgaria does not know what portion of the SOs income is from DemNet and the SOs have no information on the financial status of their NGO partners.
- There is considerable evidence that networks and partnerships are forming among the smaller NGOs, with municipal governments and in some cases, local businesses.
- New and small NGOs have different needs than the larger or more established organizations and need special materials, training, and other services that are aimed at their basic needs. Several SOs have done a good job of segmenting their market and providing different services for different groups.
- The NGO sector does very little project results or outcome monitoring partly for lack of time and partly because they do not understand the importance of such data for attracting donors. They need to be trained on the importance of good monitoring for cost effectiveness, for program quality, and for leveraging other funds.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The individual consultants' reports have a number of recommendations for the specific SO they assessed.

- USAID and ISC/Bulgaria should work together to find ways to assure continued funding for those SOs that are doing quality work but are not yet sustainable. To discontinue donor funding for these programs as planned in 2002 will jeopardize their sustainability and threaten the trust the SOs are building with local citizens and municipal leaders.
- USAID and other donors should reward good work by providing funds to replicate successful projects and providing follow-on grants that allow the projects to take root and become sustainable.
- During the final ten months of the project, DemNet should undertake, a major training and technical assistance initiative around results monitoring and the documentation of impact. The SOs and their NGO partners need these skills and information to attract continued funding.
- As there is a shortage of NGO staff with strong technical skills, USAID and other donors should find ways to continue technical training for SO staff so that they can stay ahead of the technical needs of their clients as they move toward more sustainable, and fundable, programs.
- As part of its push for better results documentation, DemNet should require that SOs report against

the results indicators in their logical frameworks. They should take the leadership and work with the NGOs that have databases to assure that those systems are compatible and can generate data on changes in the NGO sector in the regions. They should work with the regional NGOs to monitor basic changes in the sector in the region.

- DemNet should review its reporting requirements and hold SOs to higher standards of reporting including expecting reports to include analytic discussions and logical framework indicators of results.
- DemNet should develop and distribute materials on how to do the Institutional Development Framework and Service Quality Review for use by other NGOs.

Attachment E: Donor Survey Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Institute for Sustainable Communities commissioned this review to provide an opportunity for donors active in civil society assistance programs in Bulgaria to share their experiences of the past 10 years and their perceptions of the development of the NGO sector, and to describe their plans for the future with respect to support for nongovernmental organization (NGO) sector development. The review draws upon qualitative information collected through in-depth interviews, document checking, and informal discussions over a period of two months (February-March 2000). Twenty-three interviews were conducted with representatives from 18 donor organizations currently active in Bulgaria.

This review looks at a number of issues related to donor assistance strategies and practices. Part 1 presents an overview of the review while Part 2 describes the operational context for donors and NGOs in Bulgaria. An analysis of donor strategy formulation and implementation is presented in Part 3, and Part 4 looks at donor practices. Part 5 reviews donor perceptions of the NGO sector. Options for continuing study and discussion on donors' assistance are presented in Part 6.

Without ignoring other influential factors, it may be stated that over the past 10 years, more than 90 percent of the resources for developing the NGO sector in Bulgaria have come from foreign donors. Much of what the NGO sector is now—both good and bad—may be attributed to the way donor assistance programs are designed and implemented.

DONOR OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

A majority of the donors interviewed confirmed that their funding priorities and strategies are primarily influenced by issues and developments coming from their home environment and, after that, by regional mega-trends, i.e., European Union accession and, less, the Stability Pact. Lastly, they are influenced by the dynamics within the local—Bulgarian—environment.

It is important to note that within the donor community there is currently a great deal of rethinking about the impact of Western democracy assistance provided over the last decade to Eastern Europe. One outcome of this rethinking is the acknowledgment that more attention and consideration should have been given to local operating contexts and their specific uniqueness. The author sees this as not only a more politically reasonable strategy, but also a better guarantee for impact and value for money.

NGO OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

The donors interviewed perceive the current environment for NGO operation as friendly but still far from the point of enabling NGOs to develop and operate in a sustainable manner. A key point is that the necessary legal and fiscal regulations for NGOs are still not in place. Donors also expressed the view that there is currently greater scope for NGO work but that there are fewer resources to support it.

Most donors interviewed see the major role of NGOs as being strategic partners to the government in order to accomplish more in the reform process. At the same time, cooperation across these sectors is perceived as weak.

Donors tend to focus their attention and resources on particular groups of NGOs that adhere to the universal liberal agenda (democratic political life, market economy, promotion of human rights, development of civil society and environmental protection), and that are in line with regional mega-trends—something of interest to the donors themselves.

Donors, however, also acknowledge a need to pay attention to NGOs that do not represent mainstream interests and that serve smaller groups. Attention, the author notes, should be given to special programs that are not necessarily tied to the existing broad frameworks, i.e., European Union accession, Stability Pact, and United Nations forums. This will not only encourage the diversity of the NGO sector but will also check at a local level the validity of these larger frameworks.

DONOR STRATEGY FORMULATION

Guiding ideas for donor strategy formulation and implementation with relation to developing the NGO sector come mostly from much broader and pre-determined frameworks—the donor organization's mission and its domestic NGO tradition.

Donors formulate implementation strategies mostly through a rapid process of data collection and analysis accomplished by foreign experts who visit the country for short periods. Sometimes, however, this is undertaken in consultation with local NGO leaders and experts. Donors point to the shortage of internal human resources when it comes to assessing needs and formulating assistance strategies locally. There is a need, in the author's opinion, for donors to try to overcome these shortages. Better consultative processes should be carried out on a regular basis.

Donors employ a great variety of assistance strategies. There are, however, certain similarities in the changes made to donor strategies over time—increased donor pro-activeness in project implementation, increased attention to NGO development outside the capital, Sofia, decreased direct funding to NGOs.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Donors use many different implementation mechanisms for their assistance strategies with an overall move, in recent years, toward increasing local ownership on the part of NGOs.

Donors report a number of positive impacts as the result of their assistance. These reported results as described are more quantitative than qualitative. The numbers and reports are not always evaluated through careful analysis of their impact to changes in the environment and/or to beneficiaries.

Obstacles to implementation of donor assistance strategies included underdeveloped local infrastructure, negative economic and political developments in the region, and strong political and personality issues in the country and within the NGO sector.

Many donors expressed concern about the sustainability of their assistance efforts but this concern was not always adequately reflected by changes to their strategies and programs.

DONOR PRACTICES

Most of the donors described their practices as relevant and productive toward meeting their aims, although some of them pointed out that the current state was achieved through a difficult period of learning by doing. Communication and coordination among donors with relation to civil society development programs is weak. Donors indicated that better coordination would serve the following needs:

- Donors need to complement one another, not so much to avoid duplication but to avoid gaps in program areas and disbursement schedules.
- Coordinated donor efforts could increase the resources available to Bulgarian NGOs by attracting new donors or encouraging development of indigenous sources.
- Effective donor meetings are a way for donors to learn from one another and increase the quality of giving.
- Donors need to exchange information on sector development and common grantees.
- Donors should lead by example in encouraging networking and cooperation.

DONOR PERCEPTIONS OF NGO SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

In general, donors see the Bulgarian NGO sector as maturing and vibrant but with limited impact on political processes or people's lives in the country. The strongest areas of NGO activity were perceived to be in policy advice and research, consultancy services, and contribution to drafting laws. The weakest areas are seen as community development, direct service provision, and citizen mobilization.

Although donors and lead NGOs have made some efforts to close the gaps among regions in terms of NGO development, there are still "blank spots" on the map. Links among NGOs are weak and the existing support infrastructure for their development is poor. At the same time, external development resources available to NGOs are declining.

Direct funding for NGOs is declining. This is also true for all other development resources. At present, there is limited support for infrastructure and services directed to NGO development. Newcomers to the NGO sector—groups or individuals—have much fewer chances to receive training, coaching, and exposure than those that started their work between 1990 and 1993.

WAYS FORWARD

A number of other questions were identified that might lead to a possible continuation of dialogue and research with respect to this review. Strategies to address some of the concerns expressed by donors are also suggested.

- There is a need for more accurate and updated information on donor financial assistance and programs. Donors do not have in-house resources for this, but they could support interested NGOs that might provide this service.
- A review of the impact of donor assistance programs would also provide insight and understanding of the existing capacity (and capacity gaps) in the NGO sector in Bulgaria. Assessment of the impact of donor assistance would require a survey and analysis of recipients and beneficiaries experiences as well.

There is a need for donors to share best practices, learn from one another, and identify ways these best practices can be transferred to NGOs to build capacity throughout the sector.

Attachment F: ENGAGE Initiative Report

INTRODUCTION

The ENGAGE Initiative is based on “ISC’s Community Action Program (CAP)” methodology with innovations that include shortened community priority setting and action implementation processes. ISC Vermont (VT) and ISC Bulgaria (BG) implemented the Initiative in partnership with NGO Center Kardjaly Foundation in three Bulgarian communities in the Kardjali region - the municipalities of Kardjaly, Kirkovo and Ardino.

ENGAGE is based on two general premises. First, community efforts to improve well-being will only be successful when they are based upon broad community support and involvement. Second, short-term and relatively simple projects leading to concrete results help build community confidence and provide a foundation for implementing more complex and expensive projects.

The goals and expected outcomes of the Initiative were:

1. Increased participation in community problem solving and decisionmaking
 - Implemented priority setting and action process based upon broad community participation.
 - Strengthened capacity of institutions and individuals to work together to plan and implement projects to meet community needs.
 - Improved skills of community members to work together collaboratively.
 - Increased public awareness of and responsibility for addressing key community needs.
2. Improved community quality of life and vitality
 - Implemented visible, concrete, and relatively low-cost community improvements within a relatively short timeframe.

OVERVIEW OF THE ENGAGE INITIATIVE

The ENGAGE Initiative started with a survey of community action implementers currently working in Bulgaria, followed by an international “training of trainers” or TOT seminar to introduce ISC’s CAP approach and methodology and the ENGAGE adaptations.

The ENGAGE Initiative implementation consisted of the following stages:

- Preparatory stage – creating opportunities for community involvement;
- Stage 1 - involving community in the Initiative;
- Stage 2 - community participation in decisionmaking process;
- Stage 3 - community participation in implementing changes; and
- Stage 4 - evaluation of the Initiative with community participation.

The Initiative took place during the period of September, 2001 - October, 2002. It involved the efforts of many experts, consultants, volunteers and citizens. Galya Dimitrova-Zdravkova acted as Team Leader and coordinated the development, planning, and implementation of the process. Maria Popova was the ENGAGE Coordinator and served as a liaison between ISC BG staff and representatives of local communities. Popova’s work was based in the office of NGO Center Kardjaly Foundation, an ISC Bulgaria partner for the ENGAGE Initiative.

An Initiator Group (IG) was created in each municipality and led by a local coordinator (Selyahidin Karabashev for Ardino; Sylvia Spassova for Kirkovo and Galina Stephanova for Kardjaly). Methody Methodiev and Nelly Georgieva were the consultants who, together with the Team Leader, developed and delivered all the training and technical assistance under the Initiative. They also facilitated the community forums and the mini-forums held in each community. All ISC BG staff members were also involved in supporting the Initiative, providing program and financial monitoring as well as “hands on” assistance when required. Roger Clapp (ISC VT Community Action Director) provided advice and assistance throughout the process. Jane Williams- Grube (ISC Bulgaria Country Director) assisted the overall implementation by providing guidance and supervision.

After the Initiative was successfully implemented, a national conference on "Partnership for Community Development" was organized at the end of November, 2002. A booklet, *Travel Notes on a Trip into the Depths of the Community*, detailed ISC's experience with the ENGAGE Initiative and was published in both Bulgarian and English.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENGAGE INITIATIVE - ADAPTATION OF THE CAP METHODOLOGY

In September 2001, ISC BG staff conducted a survey of community action programs currently working in Bulgaria. In addition to serving as a means of presenting information on ISC's ENGAGE process, the objectives of the survey were to:

- Identify all programs and agencies that implement community development programs in Bulgaria;
- Learn from their experiences in implementing community development programs; collect information on common obstacles and possible difficulties as well as effective ways to overcome them; and
- Encourage communication between implementers of similar programs – particularly those working in Kardjali and setting the scene for the establishment of a support network.

A ToT training seminar was delivered in October, 2001 where information on ISC's overall CAP and ENGAGE approaches were presented in detail. Trainers provided input and presented cases of successful CAP implementation from abroad. Participants included Bulgarian trainers and consultants and the staff of NGO Center Kardjaly Foundation – the implementing partner of ISC BG. Training materials included a collection of tools and tips for the following topics: community selection process, community profiling, organizing and conducting a community forum, facilitation of group process, and forming and organizing an Initiators Group.

The decision to present the ToT seminar proved to be a good one, for it gave Bulgarian consultants the opportunity both to learn and reflect on the proposed ENGAGE Initiative and to start adapting it to the specifics of the Bulgarian context.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGAGE INITIATIVE IN KARDJALY REGION

Preparatory phase - Create Opportunities for Community Participation

The objectives during this phase were (1) to select communities where ENGAGE will be implemented; and (2) to provide support from key community leaders for the Initiative. Actively assisted by NGO Center Foundation Kardjaly, the ISC BG team made two exploratory visits to the region and conducted meetings with representatives of state institutions, businesses, and NGOs in five municipalities. The three municipalities ultimately selected for participation in the ENGAGE process were Ardino, Kirkovo, and Kardjaly. Selection criteria included community size and composition, level of social and economic development, citizenship behavior, presence of active NGOs, and partnership proclivities of all interested parties. In addition to facilitating selection of the municipalities, these visits allowed presentation of the CAP model and ISC BG approach to the broader public.

Stage One - Community Involvement in the Initiative

This stage had two important objectives that proved to be crucial for the successful implementation of the Initiative. They were (1) forming an Initiator Group; and (2) informing the community about ENGAGE.

The Initiator Group played a very important role throughout the whole process. It served as the engine that drove the Initiative, mobilized community efforts and contributed to each activity. Active citizens representing all sectors of the society are invited to participate, but IG members must have the time and willingness to invest their energy and efforts to fulfill the tasks they undertake.

"From the beginning of the process the initiator groups were the engine. Each initiator group chose a name for the Initiative in their municipality which embodied the main characteristics of CAP - "Together for Ardino," "Our Future is in Our Hands," in Kirkovo and "Kardjaly Decides." -- Maria Popova, ENGAGE Coordinator

In order to effectively manage all its tasks, the IG needs to build both strong capacity (skills, knowledge, attitudes) and develop its team cohesion. ISC was aware of this need and addressed it by providing focused training, relevant information, and technical assistance at each stage of initiative implementation. Through training seminars and extensive technical assistance developed and delivered by the Team Leader Galya Dimitrova and consultants Nelly Georgieva and Methody Methodiev, the following topics were covered:

- Community Action Planning Process Overview
- Communication Skills
- Workshop Facilitation
- Community Profile Development
- Public Outreach
- Working with Media
- Organizing and Conducting a Community Forum
- Project Planning
- Project Implementation
- Financial Management
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Community Celebration
- Next Steps Planning

The training and technical assistance activities were highly evaluated by all participants: *"During the seminars, each Initiator Group (IG) began [the] actual planning of the activities for the relevant project stage. Thus theory had immediately moved into practice, and the three IGs had the opportunity to work together and exchange ideas. During the trainings we were never given ready solutions but themes on which we could work. The trainers provoked the creativity of the IG and never forced their own point of view." -- Maria Popova, ENGAGE Coordinator*

The way to achieve the second objective – inform the community - is illustrated by the words of the Kardjaly local coordinator, Galina Stephanova: *"One of our basic goals was to involve as many citizens and partners as possible. Each IG choose its own path to reach the community - during the process of data collection for the profiles, through surveys assessing community opinion, information boards, other occasions that collect many people at one place... It was especially important that everyone hear about the Initiative."*

Stage Two - Community Participation in Decisionmaking

This stage had two objectives - conducting a needs assessment and setting priorities for action. A needs assessment was done in each municipality using the community profiling process. An expert was hired to conduct a survey of demographic, social, economical, environmental, health, infrastructure, and educational data. All members of the IG contributed to the process of data collection.

The second objective - priorities setting - includes creating a community vision and conducting a community forum. About 300 people took part in three large community forums conducted in each municipality facilitated by Methody Methodiev and Nely Georgieva. The three IGs decided it was important to involve youth in the process of creating a community vision. Contests for drawings and

essays were organized in each municipality, and young people were encouraged to draw a picture of their birthplace as they see it in their dreams. The effect of this stage was an incredible one of both inspiration and motivation for Initiative participants and for engaging the broader community.

The three IGs spent considerable time planning the community forums to be sure that they provided an opportunity for everybody to express his/her opinion and to encourage the empowerment of citizen activity. About 300 people in Kardjaly, 200 people in Ardino, and 140 people in Kirkovo representing different age, gender, ethnic, social, and professional groups were directly involved the priority-setting during the 12 mini-forums (6 in Kardjaly, 4 in Ardino, and 2 in Kirkovo). This open and democratic discussion of community priorities also created a sense of partnership between citizens and institutions.

Stage Three - Community Participation in Implementing Changes

Community forums and appointment of working groups were responsible for planning and developing projects to address the identified priority problems. Eight projects were implemented (1 in Kirkovo, 4 in Kardjaly, 3 in Ardino) and funded with approximately \$15,000 for each municipality. They include the following:

- “ - grant awarded: \$3,273
- - grant awarded: \$3,886
- “Melo movie mania club” - grant awarded: \$3,827 - grant awarded: \$4,113
- m - grant awarded: \$4,545
- - grant awarded: \$4,845
- ” - grant awarded: \$6,219
- - grant awarded: \$15,125

The goal of all the projects was to create immediate and tangible results affecting a large segment of the population in each municipality by offering significant improvements in their quality of life.

Community participation in making changes was encouraged through use of many different tools. Each step in project implementation was announced through local media, in meetings, and conversations. Flexible structure of project coordination was established whereby “*everybody had a vote.*” Here is how Maria Popova described the process: “*At that moment we started to collect the fruits of our work for community involvement. We found it easy to receive support from anybody we asked. I don't know if it was the democratic way of decision making or the transparency of the whole process that changed the public attitude which is traditionally passive.*” More than 60 people served as volunteers during implementation of the projects. Representatives of businesses and state authorities supported community efforts and contributed significantly to each of the eight mini projects. The overall amount of support from Municipal administrations, businesses, and citizens for all eight projects totaled \$32,000.

Stage Four - Evaluation of the Initiative with Community Participation

The last stage of ENGAGE Initiative had two objectives:

- to evaluate the process and results achieved by ENGAGE Initiative; and
- to celebrate the results and plan for next steps.

Each Initiator Group developed a plan for evaluation of the achieved results and for adequately presenting them to the broader community. To gain perspective on their accomplishments, members of the project team and Initiator Groups organized a tour of CAP projects in Macedonia and reviewed outcomes with program staff and community participants. Celebration events were organized in each community during which the results were presented, the services offered by each project were promoted, and future steps were planned. The words of Kemal Aliev, member of the Ardino Initiator Group, might be used to illustrate the overall impact of the Initiative: “*I became a new person after joining the Initiative group. I am totally changed both in my personal and professional life. I am looking at a new mirror and when I see problems there I do not blame the mirror, I try to change myself.*”

As a result of the raised and accumulated citizens energy, one new NGO was established in Kardlaj named “Kardjaly Decides.” It received two working rooms from a business partner and is now operational after being technically equipped by ISC. The NGO in Kirkovo evaluated its organizational capacity as

significantly increased as a result of the Initiative. The IG in Ardino is in the process of formally registering but has already taken steps to fulfill its mission of contributing to an improved quality of life for Ardino citizens. Leaders and members of that organization shared that they are inspired by the approach offered by ISC and afterwards were amazed to see its result. They are strongly devoted to continue to apply it for the good of the community.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

A National Conference "Partnership for Community Development" was organized by ISC at the end of November, 2002 in Borovets. More than 120 participants took part, representing 18 organizations that implement community action, ENGAGE, or community action-like approaches as well as many practitioners and citizens who are otherwise involved in implementing programs. The conference achieved several important objectives: ISC presented the successful completion of ENGAGE Initiative, sustaining its almost unique image of an organization that is open to the public, shares its approach and working style, and works for strengthening the synergy between different parties. All participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction about learning what other programs are doing and having the chance to present themselves in public. The training component of the Conference event received a favorable evaluation for having increasing participants' knowledge and skills.

PUBLICATION

"Travel Notes of a Trip into the Depths of the Community - A Manual for Fulfilling Dreams" was published in early 2003 in Bulgarian and English and presented the CAP methodology and the ENGAGE Initiative implementation.

RESULTS OF THE ENGAGE INITIATIVE

- Citizens became more motivated to engage more in community affairs;
- Concrete community improvements were made as a result of citizen-led initiatives,
- Existing NGOs significantly increased their capacity and became better at connecting to citizens, identifying real community needs, and attaining community interest, trust and will for involvement;
- Municipal authorities gained a better understanding and respect for the role citizens and NGOs can play in community affairs;
- Businesses and citizens contributed useful resources to the Initiative; and
- A sense of responsibility was created in each participant (citizens and institutions) for improving community vitality and quality of life.

Attachment G: Travel Notes Publication

The Travel Notes Publication is not included with this electronic document. If you are interested in a copy of this publication, please contact the Institute for Sustainable Communities at 802-229-2900 or isc@iscvt.org.

Attachment H: Voices for Change Publication

If you are interested in the publication *Voices for Change* please visit our website at iscvt.org.

Attachment I: Advocacy Initiative Report

ADVOCACY INITIATIVE REPORT

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) implements the Democracy Network Program (DemNet) in Bulgaria. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), DemNet supports 13 Support Organizations (SOs) that provide a range of services to strengthen the wider civil society sector. The services include grant making, training and technical assistance, public policy advice, and information and networking. USAID's rationale for supporting DemNet in Bulgaria, and activities like it throughout the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, is to address its strategic objective of "Increased, Better-Informed Citizen's Participation in Public Policy Decision-Making."

Civil society organizations play an important role engaging the public in policy dialogue and developing the habits of active civic participation. Building the skills of individuals, organizations and communities to advocate effectively for their interests is critical to fulfilling the promise of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as key elements of a healthy democracy—and of USAID's own strategic objectives in this area.

Broadly stated, advocacy is the organized pursuit of changes in the policies, positions and programs of any type of institution that serves the interests and needs of a constituency. Advocacy can encompass public education campaigns, media outreach, lobbying elected or appointed officials, law drafting, and other steps necessary to exercise influence or achieve a desired outcome.

Bulgarian NGOs play an increasing role in educating and involving citizens in activities to identify and resolve issues of public interest. NGOs play a key part in engaging citizens more intimately in the political process and enabling them to hold government accountable for addressing their needs. DemNet, with its core of influential support organizations, is a logical vehicle to enhance and expand the contribution of civil society to the political decision-making process.

To this end, in December 2001, ISC through DemNet spearheaded an assessment of advocacy activities by civil society organizations in Bulgaria, with an eye to identifying possible long-term activities for advocacy promotion that may lie outside the scope of DemNet as well as identifying more immediate steps for establishing a permanent advocacy capacity for individuals and institutions to provide technical and other forms of assistance to NGOs, community groups, and other elements of civil society.

II. METHODOLOGY

The needs assessment team collected information from a variety of sources during a two-week visit to Bulgaria in December 2001. Led by David Cohen, Co-director and Co-chair of the Advocacy Institute and former President of Common Cause, the team included ISC Vermont and Bulgaria staff and as well as staff from DemNet SO Partner, Institute for Regional and International Studies (IRIS). A group of Bulgaria advisors who are experienced and knowledgeable about the ways of Bulgarian NGOs, civil society and governance at the national, municipal, and local level were also part of the team, providing first hand guidance on the complexities of Bulgarian governance and democratization (see Appendix A). The team:

- assessed the advocacy experience and capacity of selected SO partners as well as the broader civil society sector;
- identified advocacy programs funded by USAID and analyzed where gaps lie in terms of addressing program areas; and

- identified the most pressing concerns of SOs and other civil society organizations which might form the basis of future advocacy campaigns.

In preparation for the needs assessment, ISC Bulgaria conducted a preliminary survey of 40 NGOs to discover their level of experience with advocacy campaigns. The sampling indicated that 29 of the NGOs surveyed had been involved in advocacy initiatives on an assortment of issues from promoting an ombudsman bill at the national level to working to eliminate discrimination against Roma at the local level (survey summary in Appendix B). The majority of organizations conducted their campaigns with little or no formal advocacy training and with varying degrees of success and citizen involvement.

The team visited many different NGO sites, local government offices and Parliament, bringing a variety of methodologies to the assessment process, including: interviews; focus groups; informal sessions; observation of programs; meetings; and strategy sessions.

The team met with 72 people associated with 36 different NGOs from Sofia, Pleven, Silven, Veliko Tarnovo, Varna, Rousse, Pazardjik, Gabrovo, and Plovdiv. In addition, the team met with 15 public officials – four MPs and five public officials from Pleven, including the mayor. Meetings were also held with other USAID implementers such as the Local Government Initiative (LGI), MSI – Managing Policy Change, and the Foundation for Local Government Reform (FLGR) as well as USAID staff (complete meeting schedule found in Appendix C).

While these represent high numbers for visits to different organizations and sectors, equally important is the range of issues represented in these visits. They included groups working on women’s rights (domestic violence and trafficking), ethnic relations, media, youth, cultural, environmental, local governance, government reform, Roma issues, transparency, law enforcement, sustainable development and small business.

III. Essential Lessons

A. Assessing Bulgaria’s Advocacy Culture

What the team learned contradicts a conventional wisdom that has grown up about the advocacy capacity of the civil society sector in Bulgaria -- that the gap between people wanting to participate (high) and actual participation (low) is nearly insurmountable. Reinforced by donors and intermediaries seeking funding, the perception has adverse consequences because it undervalues the many achievements of NGOs and discourages new initiatives that could further strengthen their contributions to a more engaged and articulate population. It ignores the reality that changing political cultures is long-term and time consuming and that for the experience to “take” requires time. Many a Bulgarian practitioner showed real understanding of this circumstance by using the word “persistence” as a needed quality.

What is remarkable is that the change in political culture in fact has been very accelerated, in part by the serious exchange occurring among European Union countries and North America, especially the U.S. and Bulgarian participants. This has been reinforced further by low-cost interactive technologies.

NGOs are beginning to lay the groundwork for, and building their experience on, the recognition that there is a vast difference between having “connections” to influence outcomes in contrast to building relationships that flow from public and institutional responsibilities. “Connections” is a word that comes up over and over again to describe what people believe happens in Bulgaria. Connections are personal, based on favoritism, not always fair, and their use at times extralegal, if not illegal.

Polling data, which has been used to underpin a negative view of the advocacy capacity of civil society, provides an immediate snapshot and nothing more. There is a tendency to think of polling data as fully stating the conclusions of a specific poll and locking in its findings as eternal verities rather than trying to understand what lies beneath the data. Trying to understand the data leads to asking what interventions by donors are the most helpful and what interventions will make the most practical sense.

To be valuable, polling data must be looked at over a period of time against an established baseline for comparison. There is a vast difference between being critical and learning from the critiques and emphasizing what does not work well as a prelude to action. In Bulgaria there is much to build on. The team found the will to create a direction for change that is under-appreciated in many parts of the donor community.

In a democratic society, aspiring to strengthen its civil society as Bulgaria does, an attentive public is vital. Gaining public attention requires changing political cultures, examining modes of organizing key audiences and gaining genuine feedback from different sectors of society, including ordinary citizens. Advocacy initiatives need to focus on issues of immediate concern to citizens if committed public participation is to occur.

Advocacy practitioners are realistic; there are no wearers of rose-colored glasses among those the team met, observed and discussed. NGO activists are sophisticated at finding the soft political underbellies and overcoming resistance. They have a sense of how to navigate political and policy systems, initiate strategy and create a sense of possible accomplishment.

For example, the substantial political agreement within Bulgaria about joining the European Union enables a group of environmentalists to articulate why Bulgaria should comply with environmental standards just as neighboring countries are doing. At the same time, those experienced in Bulgarian advocacy are mindful of the obstacles they face. Some days they may articulate them with a sense of despair and inevitability. But other days they see them as part of the political and social landscape that has to be overcome. What is important is that despair and inevitability are challenged.

NGOs are not necessarily household names in Bulgaria, nor should they be expected to be -- anywhere in the world. The crucial factor is their achievements in advocacy on all points on the political spectrum, from local to national. There even can even be negative stories about NGOs as they follow project funding or are perceived to be business entrepreneurs rather than pursuing public benefits.

While there certainly have been gains at the national level, the team found the most significant results at the local and regional level. This is important -- and bodes well for meaningful progress toward sustained and effective advocacy in Bulgaria -- because it is arguable that change in the political culture must occur first at the local level. For ordinary people in ordinary circumstances to gain confidence in their skills, in the value of their ideas and the legitimacy of their needs—reinforced by success in making themselves heard—is the essential building block for a constituency that supports civic activism on a wider stage.

B. Building on USAID Investments and Existing Local Capacity

The team found that many NGOs understand well their responsibility to advocate on behalf of their constituencies and to play a part in shaping and influencing Bulgarian society. That understanding informs the advocacy work of NGOs. USAID initiatives over the past five years have played a critical part in creating the strong base of successful advocacy activity the team found. In particular, a number of the activities carried out under the Local Government Initiative, International Center for non Profit Law, MSI-Implementing Policy Change and DemNet have contributed to deepening knowledge and awareness of the role of advocacy in effecting change. These programs have also helped to build skills through training and mentoring. What was observed was that, except in situations where good will provided the impetus, there was little formal coordination among the players and that too often the potential impact of "one off" activities that could have been built upon were diminished.

The work of these groups extends beyond Parliament and is building local experience and laying the groundwork for decentralization as a result of emerging relationships with local officials. In fact, the team's findings confirm what many practitioners and theorists, in USAID and outside, have come to embrace: that a viable practice of political engagement requires the trust and confidence of a broad base at the grass roots. Successful examples of different forms of cooperation on advocacy initiatives include:

- Coalitions have formed across ethnic lines to promote school integration with the support of public officials, and the Turkish language taught as an optional subject in mixed communities;

- Women have successfully intervened to insist on law enforcement for matters dealing with trafficking so that the organized procurers are the ones who are targeted by law enforcement officials;
- Successful actions have occurred on forestry matters, sustainable development issues around water shed issues and opposition to toxic landfills;
- Six municipalities came to a common solution on how to utilize a river basin, to protect it environmentally and protect their livelihoods;
- Groups organized themselves to keep children in school; and
- Villages banded themselves together and periodically brought medical doctors so that villagers received needed medical attention.

Organizing across ethnic lines can be a challenge faced by those practicing advocacy in Bulgaria. The team found, for example, at the Center for Social Practices adherence to the critical idea of ethnic minorities being citizens first. The goal is integration as well as continuing the memory and ownership of ethnic identity—traditions, rituals, celebrations, culture and political representation. The organized groups confront the issue of power and acknowledge among themselves that they are taking power from the state. These multi-ethnic NGOs work on a wide range of critical problems of common concern in their communities.

NGOs have also promoted collaboration between those who work in local and regional settings. The Foundation for Local Government Reform (FLGR), for example, brings together external experts with government officials and draws on other parts of civil society to forge solutions to intractable problems. In the case of the Territorial Development Act, a combination of architects, lawyers, housing associations, and different businesses all contributed to peeling away the barriers to the problem so that agreed upon solutions could come into play.

Like NGOs, the Parliament is also making new contributions to civil society. Bulgarian MPs who are attentive to strengthening Parliament as an institution are properly proud of the newly created Parliamentary Information Center. They are aware that hearings can now be held outside of Sofia. The dearth of staff for MPs contributes to an understanding that NGOs can help legislators with the information and tools needed to have an impact on Bulgarian governance. In many respects the same principles apply at the local level. How can local governing officials get the necessary feedback? What examples are there of effective local government and non-government collaboration or partnerships?

The team came away with a firm conclusion that the state of NGO contributions to civil society and democratic governance is greater than is conventionally recognized. One reason that is so is that public officials acknowledge and believe, especially elected ones from our observations, that NGOs are a vital link to productive governance. This is itself an indicator of strength.

These groups are fragile, but the effort to bring them together and to discuss common problems, creative solutions or even mundane ones as well as to share what does or does not work represents an effort that merits close observation. One cannot overemphasize the importance of organized communities to undergird a robust civic infrastructure

IRIS, a DemNet partner, has been in the forefront of developing and tracking advocacy programs in Bulgaria. With funding through DemNet, IRIS has developed a theoretical model of an advocacy campaign. Working across the spectrum, from the local to the national level, IRIS tests the model to determine how local or national advocacy interventions will increase public interest or satisfactorily begin to deal with public issues or problems. The model provides the basis of a specific advocacy capacity-building approach that can be replicated throughout the country. The four basic steps are:

- development of a strategic plan;
- coalition building;
- organizing a media campaign; and

- dialogue with representatives of local and national authorities.

IV. Identifying Advocacy Needs

NGOs in Bulgaria recognize the importance of advocacy, and they are increasingly effective at communicating with government on the local and national level with the aim of influencing public policy, but need to gain experience on the best ways to engage the public. Effective advocacy requires public participation to promote citizen's interest and improve accountability of governance. NGOs need to strengthen the voice of fellow citizens in the political process by creating a democratic dialogue between citizens and government. NGOs can help facilitate that dialogue by demystifying the regulatory and legislative process for constituents, weaving in public participation, and building relationships between citizens and government. Specifically, the team found:

- There is a general lack of understanding on how to build membership bases or constituencies and to forge coalitions;
- The dialogue between citizens and government is weak;
- NGOs lack skill in developing media campaigns as part of advocacy initiatives, especially beyond the local level;
- Bulgarian NGOs need a deeper understanding of lobbying practices and points of entry for citizen participation; and
- NGOs need a more consistent means of sharing information, both about current advocacy issues and above available advocacy expertise.

V. BUILDING LONG-TERM ADVOCACY CAPACITY IN THE CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

The NGO community is an untapped resource for Bulgarian civil society and its further strengthening will improve democratic governance. Mindful of the criticisms of the civil society sector and, at the same time, the many strengths and achievements observed by the team, there are several concrete ways DemNet can begin now to strengthen advocacy skills and to raise the level of attention paid to advocacy by the civil society community. ISC proposes two comprehensive components:

- Develop an advocacy curriculum, supported by a core of individual practitioners and organizations, to support ongoing advocacy efforts in the country; and
- Adapt select advocacy activities to include a component of Citizen Action Advocacy, aimed at providing grassroots groups with relevant skills to implement the action agendas.

A. Advocacy Curriculum

ISC will first identify a core group who will participate in a curriculum development process related to critical advocacy themes. It is anticipated that the individuals selected to participate in this process will have relationships with key Bulgarian NGOs and institutions, so that individual capacities will be overlaid by a matrix of strong organizations that also will have advocacy as a part of their "civil society toolkits."

The core group should be a mix of people who are advocates and have served as trainers. They must be respected within their organization as well as outside of it. They do not have to be well-known. This is about creating a mix of people who will be builders of a community of advocacy practitioners and who will share their knowledge as well as continue their own learning. It is strongly recommended that this program occur in the United States for purposes of reflection, concentration, intensity and exposure to other NGOs. Experience shows that a program away from home expands the sense of possibility without abandoning what is realistic.

This initiative is referred to as a curriculum because, much like a college course, each segment will be related to the next and build upon it, to avoid the "one-off" phenomenon that often diffuses the impact

of training. The curriculum development training will, in turn, be complemented by follow on training and practica in Bulgaria, whereby a broader group of participants will undertake exercises in their communities or organizations that are relevant to the “course work” of the advocacy curriculum. The practica will serve as homework for succeeding workshops by building on ongoing efforts.

In addition, attention needs to be paid in Bulgaria to matters dealing with training methodology. This would include an explicit focus on how values and beliefs are surfaced as well as attention to the attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to produce excellent training facilitators. For example, the creation of a culture of peer counseling or coaching and the importance of modeling participatory behavior have proven important to effective training in other settings and may be relevant here.

The nature and content of the curriculum will be further refined in the design process and links made to the practica. At present it is expected that topics will focus on areas such as:

- Selecting Advocacy Objectives
- Using Data and Research
- Developing Strategies
- Identifying Audiences and Constituencies
- Building Political Support
- Developing and Delivery Advocacy Messages
- Building and Managing Coalitions
- Making Persuasive Presentations
- Working with Media
- Fundraising for Advocacy
- Evaluating Advocacy Efforts and Learning From Experience

The aim of the Advocacy Curriculum is to develop and maintain a resource of advocacy skills on which the range of civil society players can call upon into the indefinite future as issues arise where advocacy expertise is required. Specific results will include:

- A core of individuals in Bulgaria who can serve as trainers and mentors on advocacy efforts from the local to the national level;
- A similar core of organizations for which advocacy is a high priority and a key element of their services to the civil society sector;
- A basic training curriculum which can be offered, in whole or in part, to individuals, NGOs and communities as the need arises; and
- Written materials that can be provided when formal training is not possible or desired.

B. Community Action Advocacy

Community Action Advocacy (CAA) will be applied in communities where an ongoing advocacy initiative is occurring and serve as the locus of practica for at least some of the participants in the Advocacy Curriculum program. CAA is based upon the premise that advocacy is most effective when citizens are an integral part of the process and there is broad based community support for an advocacy campaign. The goal is to increase citizen participation and strengthen the capacity of organizations and individuals to work together to meet common needs.

CAA begins with an NGO conducting outreach for a particular advocacy initiative among key leaders of different stakeholder groups in the community who share a vested interest in the issue. These leaders form an Activist Group whose responsibilities are to raise public awareness and build alliances with additional stakeholders.

A series of forums around the issue of the advocacy initiative are held in the community. Through small and large group sessions, citizens develop a “vision of change.” The vision of change defines the goals of the advocacy initiative. An Advocacy Action Plan is developed and several Task Forces are formed as a result of the forum to implement the Action Plan. The Action Plan lays out the steps of the advocacy campaign and may include such activities as:

- Researching the issue;
- Power mapping;
- Targeting points of entry into governmental processes;
- Engaging government officials as partners;
- A petition drive or other presentations to government officials; and
- Conducting public education to mobilize popular support through direct outreach and the mass media.

ISC will provide assistance throughout the process, including obtaining support of key leaders; forming and training the Activist Group; training Task Force members on key activities; and providing small grants for advocacy implementation activities.

Results of CAA will include:

- Practical experience gained in advocacy techniques which is linked to ongoing advocacy initiatives;
- A model for grassroots advocacy that can be applied in communities where other community development activities are taking place under USAID and other donor auspices;
- Materials and training modules specifically designed for grassroots advocacy programs; and
- A core of experienced community level practitioners.

VI. OTHER TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The team made a variety of other recommendations, some of which will be included in ongoing DemNet programming. Others are outside the scope and purview of DemNet’s work but are relevant to USAID’s larger democracy and governance programming.

A. NGOs and Advocacy

An information sharing network should be created among NGOs to create and publish an advocacy index that establishes a baseline of advocacy actions and capacities. It would list what activities are planned for the year and identify those that are completed. This will allow NGOs to share information and start addressing problems. It also will serve as a mechanism for networking and coalition building, bringing the NGO community together around common issues.

B. Media

Media is a convergence arena of advocacy. Activists recognize its power. They know they have to find ways to gain access to the media. They are less focused on the framing of issues in the media, but they are quite mindful that messages and messengers are essential. Interestingly, those who are skeptical, if not negative, about NGOs generally, and the overall effectiveness of civil society work, recognize the importance of the media. The media is important, but not as a leveler of the playing field as they mostly assert. It helps gain access and recognition for those who are organizing. It legitimizes focusing on problems that are important.

The relevant role for the media provides a special opportunity for donors to provide educational seminars to editors and journalists (print and electronic) at the local and national levels. The team heard over and over again of the countryside-city gap in which the countryside does not feel that it is connected to Bulgarian society. The focus, therefore, would be on assisting local journalists deal with topics that center on local governance, women’s issues, environmental health and sustainable development, in addition to

promoting greater public understanding of Bulgaria's political system and policy processes. No work with journalists should come at the expense of shifting resources from work with NGOs. However, connections between NGOs and the media groups will benefit both sectors – the media organizations desperately need the expertise and background for quality coverage and the NGOs need more coverage.

- Though DemNet's SO Partner the Bulgarian Media Coalition, trainings should be held to increase journalistic understanding of the role of NGOs in governance and how issues such as women and minority rights affect different segments of the population that are represented by NGOs. The trainings should focus on how coverage of such issues can promote citizen involvement and why such coverage is important.

C. Legislative Advocacy

For civil societies to be robust, for democratic practices and processes to become stronger, the organs of self-government and the organs of civil society must be in a healthy state, one that connotes effectiveness, responsiveness, accessibility and accountability. None of this should suggest any quest for perfection. Perfection paralyzes action. It recognizes that the democratic process always has its distortions, needed corrections of power imbalances, and institutions in a state of unsatisfactory repair that need tending. Yet, there is much to build on, beginning in 2002. None of these recommendations are pie-in-the-sky wishes or ones that must wait years to get started. Some are already ongoing. They should not be seen as quick fixes designed to get past a problem. They are the stuff of what civil society should be and getting there more slowly is realistic.

Make Use of Parliamentary Reforms

There have been significant advances in the Parliament that are of potential benefit to civil society groups. Clearly an improved record of civil society groups using these reforms - particularly advocacy NGOs - is critical to their success.

Parliamentary Information Center

What is striking is that a critical number of parliamentarians are proud that they created the Center. It is building a professional staff that is quite cognizant of the special relationship between civil society organizations, parliament and the necessity of public space to hold forums and discussions as a means of sorting public problems out. To be more effective, the Center must be used by NGOs to further their issues. That will happen only if the NGOs have a better understanding of the Center's purposes and its value.

- NGOs should work with the Center to hold a series of roundtables on issues of interest to them as any advocate wants to have a maximum airing of an issue to both attract the attention of decisionmakers as well as to identify other potential supporters.
- The Center should publish Committee meetings, and NGOs should provide the link between the committee and public input.
- NGOs, with the help of the Center, need to be a resource for educating the civil society sector about Parliamentarians and identifying who citizens might work with on an issue of concern.
- Within each party caucus there are political entrepreneurs, initiators, and potential innovators. These are the internal change advocates. They are necessary and therefore valuable allies to the NGOs and other civil society groups. Among NGOs there is a dearth of knowledge about who these officials are and what their interests are.

Hearings Outside of Sofia

The standing rules of the Parliament now permit hearings to be held outside of Sofia. Each standing Committee should be expected to hold two or three such hearings each year. This can be a commonality issue in which different NGOs attentive to the Committee's prime area of jurisdiction can be asked assist with hearings in different localities. The NGOs would acquire increased skills in dealing with the Parliament by taking action on matters that are already part of the rules and procedures of the Bulgarian Parliament.

- NGOs should work with the standing Committees to help coordinate public hearings and be a valuable resource to Committee members by helping to increase public attendance at such hearings and by coordinating media coverage.

Staffing Parliament

NGOs should find ways to help fill staff positions in the Parliament. Anyone who has spent any time around legislative bodies—it matters not whether it is a separation of powers system or a parliamentary system—experiences the importance of professional staff members as the constant educators of legislative officials. The elected officials will sort out the politics, but in complex and fast moving societies their education is also essential. That education will create a necessary understanding of the problems that have to be faced. Ideally, even appropriately, this should be something that is publicly supported. In the meantime, the activist MPs need staff assistance. Help with staffing provides an opportunity for those NGOs that have the technical skills to accomplish this purpose.

- The SUNY effort could lay the groundwork for a publicly supported staff. Is it practical? Is there a place to begin? Are there boundaries to be established or does it not matter? Involving the SUNY group is a specific avenue for initiating the discussion.
- The recently established Civil Society Commission could serve as a resource for linking other committees and members of Parliament for the purpose of drawing on the expertise of NGOs, think tanks in particular.

D. Local Governance

The Local Government Initiative (LGI), the Foundation for Local Government Reform (FLGR), and by reputation the National Association of Municipalities, each present strong examples of organizations functioning in civil society at local levels throughout Bulgaria.

Local governance institutions provide a pivotal place for making progress on advocacy. Here, as in so many other parts of the world, there is a move towards decentralization. Local governments are of course governing institutions with varying levels of accountability and responsiveness as the team learned in so many of its visits. Local governments are also petitioners as they seek resources and elimination of institutional obstacles to the functions they are expected to perform.

As these entities demonstrate, there is a place for identifying innovative approaches and best practices and for applying lessons learned, particularly for methods of ensuring that governments are responsive to citizens and for documenting places where citizens are engaging in advocacy techniques. Various experiences—Pleven, the Danube River basin, examples of best practices collected by LGI and FLGR—begin to stand out. What is missing is the collection of innovative advocacy techniques tried at the local level -- examples of NGO's building constructive relationships and/or partnerships with local government jurisdictions. Every effort should be made to involve local governments in the Citizen Action Advocacy initiatives discussed in the NGO recommendations section.

In concluding this section we believe that by strengthening Parliament, local government and media as institutions, the ground work is laid, provided there is an ongoing strengthening of NGO advocacy capacity, to tackle serious future issues including the allocation of Bulgaria's limited resources and its adaptation to the overall standards of the European community.

VII. CONCLUSION

What this report has tried to convey is that participants in NGO activity in Bulgaria are ready for something deeper. A broad audience for advocacy, the complaints to the contrary notwithstanding, exists. It is found in a variety of NGOs outside of Sofia as well as in it. It also includes elected officials at the local and national level and people working in public agencies who are implementers. Each of these individuals is a resource for strengthening the fabric of Bulgaria civil society and social capital.

In addition to the practical people—who are not frozen by rigid ideologies—the additional strength includes a plurality of Bulgarian approaches to organizing and advocacy, a sufficient number of existing access points so that the system (whatever its imperfections) can be entered and engaged to achieve practical results. Therefore, it should be possible to create additional access points.

Advocacy requires a mindset that initiates, innovates and invents. It is a psychology of placing demands on the system and then within the confines of the culture and system efforts are made to protect what has been gained or gain what has not been achieved.

Organize, yes; build alliances and coalitions, yes; lobby, yes. It is all to the end of strengthening citizen participation, representative government and establishing a healthy sense of citizen rights and responsibilities.

APPENDIX A: ADVOCACY ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS

Anna Chernova – Specialist on Minority and Refugee Rights and a Fulbright scholar

David Cohen – Co-Director and Co-Chair, Advocacy Institute

Galya Dimitrova-Zdrakova – Program Manager for Training and Technical Assistance, ISC

Petya Kabachieva – Sociologist and Associate Professor at Sofia University

Gabriela Marinova – Professional Staff Member to the Committee on Civil Society Affairs of the Parliament

Alexander Mihaylov – Researcher and analyst on local governance; Serves the Sofia Municipality

Susan Stitely – Program Officer, ISC

Elena Triffonova – Program Director, Institute for Regional and International Studies

Marieta Tzvetkova – Program Manager for Support Organization Coordination, ISC

Gergana Vassileva – Program Coordinator, IRIS

Jane Williams-Grube – Country Director, ISC

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF RESULTS FROM ISC SURVEY ON BULGARIAN NGO ADVOCACY

Background

In November 2001, ISC Bulgaria surveyed 40 Bulgarian NGOs to assess their experience with advocacy and provide ISC a general idea of sector activism and capacity. Both oral interviews and written questionnaires were used, and both national and regional groups contacted. Of the 40 groups, 29 had some measure of experience with advocacy. A brief overview of findings is included below.

Skills

One clear finding is that NGO skills in the area of advocacy are uneven at best. The majority of organizations lack systematic training in the planning and conduct of an advocacy campaign, instead following their intuition and learning by doing. Many have adapted expertise from similar fields such as public relations and marketing. Others adapted what they have read or heard about the practice of advocacy in other countries. Exceptions to this generalization are groups that were able to participate in advocacy seminars offered by MSI or LGI during 1998 and 2001. IRIS has also developed an advocacy model through pilot campaigns.

Needs

Respondents cited the following array of general advocacy training needs: campaign strategies, media outreach, negotiation skills, conflict resolution, public organizing techniques, adapting foreign practices, identifying sponsors, and coalition building. Additional findings include the assertion that advocacy is a way of thinking rather than a set of skills and that advocacy is best undertaken only by organizations that are already well-established.

Challenges/Assets

Challenges typically encountered by those who have undertaken campaigns include the following: difficulty establishing a dialogue with decisionmakers, public's unfamiliarity with NGOs, lack of political will on issue of concern, dearth of reliable information, competition within NGO sector, coalition problems, lack of funding, insufficient legal expertise, traditional public attitudes, frequent turnover of authorities, complicated government procedures, and lack of professional expertise.

In terms of what is believed to be most helpful to advocacy, leadership and strong coalitions were cited repeatedly. More specifically, respondents noted the importance of a leader having personal authority, experience, good communication skills, extensive personal contacts, and confidence that transfers to team members. Others noted that leaders who can mobilize and attract support need not be experts in the campaign issue. Some attributed their past progress on advocacy goals to well-coordinated coalitions where responsibilities were clearly assigned.

Past and Future Campaigns

Bulgarian NGOs have engaged in an advocacy campaigns addressing a wide array of topics, including tax legislation, media regulation, environmental protection, gender equality, civic participation, and community development. Future campaign ideas cited include: legislation providing jobs for the disabled, alignment of Bulgarian and EU media legislation, laws on personal data protection, mechanisms for attracting more Roma teachers, better access to financial credit for Roma, and measures to prevent discrimination against women and Roma.

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUPS AND MEETINGS WITH IMPLEMENTERS/DONORS/ MPS/LEGAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS/NGOS WITH ADVOCACY EXPERIENCE

First Focus Group

Anelia Atanasova (LGI)
Jordan Sirakov (LGI)
Filip Stoianovich (MSI)
Lilia Joujou (MSI)
Ivo Christov (Legal Commission, NA)
Liudmila Georgieva (Common Cause)
Michael Bojadzhiev (BCNL)
Svetlana Lomeva (PACE)
Valentin Georgiev (Secretary of 38 NA)
Petya Gegova (MP, NA)
Alexander Mihailov (Sofia municipality)

SECOND FOCUS GROUP

Alexander Kashumov (AIP)
Gergana Zhuleva (AIP)
Dimitar Sotirov (BMC)
Konstantin Tanev (CSD)
Maria Ianeva (ACCESS)
Ognian Lipovski (Information and Consultancy Center)
Diana Angelova (DCC)
Zhivko Tsirkov (DCC)
Veslava Abadjieva (TIME)
Boryana Hrisimova (TIME)

Organizations Interviewed

December 13th, 2001

1. Center for Social Practices (CSP)

Evgenij Dainov

2. LGI seminar with lawyers from Ministries at the Institute for Public Administration and European Integration

Mr. George Manliev, Executive Director of the IPAEI

3. IRIS

Ognian Mintchev, Elena Trifonova, Marin Lessenski, Assya Hristova, Gergana Vassileva, Plamen Raltchev

Pleven – Milena Stoeva (Local Coordinator Pleven)

Sliven – Dimitar Ivanov (Local Coordinator Sliven)

Plovdiv – Sonya Taushanova (Chair of the Board of the Foundation “Culture-Art-Children)

December 14th, 2001

1. Chitalishte “LIK”

Daniela Dimitrova – Executive Director of the public fund “Chitalishta”

Katya Bozhikova – Assistant at the chitalishte “LIK”

2. Pleven municipality

Naiden Zelenogorski – Mayor of Pleven municipality

Sofia Valchinkova – Executive Secretary of the municipality

Valentin Mateev – Deputy Mayor

Mr. Makedonski - Deputy Mayor

Ilia Iliev – representative of the municipality in the Board of the public fund “Chitalishta”

3. Veliko Tarnovo

Gergana Daskalova – European Information Centre

Kelly Smith – Volunteer at the EIC

Stoyan Nikolov – Executive Secretary OSC-Varna

Galya Petrova – Program Director OSC-Varna

Zhechka Kalinova – Chair of the Board of the OSC-Rousse

Lora Sarkissian – Executive Secretary OSC-Rousse

Mikaela Zdravkova – Coordinator OSC-Rousse

December 15th, 2001

1. Seminar of the Ecoclub “Detelina” in Gabrovo

Adrian Vassilev – Chairman of the Board

Bozhidar Petrov – Local IRIS Coordinator

December 17th, 2001

1. Plovdiv - Green Balkans

Hristo Nikolov – Member of the Board

Valentina Fidanova – Member of the Board

Ivelin Ivanov – Chair of a division group

Gradimir Gradev – Volunteer

2. Pazardjik - Regional Fund IGA

Marina Manolcheva – Chair of the Board

Dimitar Rusinov –Board Chairman (Ctr. for Integration of Crime Manifested & Risk Groups)

*Bulgaria Democracy Network Program II
Final Report Attachment*

Vesela Gerova – Local IRIS Coordinator

December 18th, 2001

1. BCNL – SUNY seminar

Ivo Hristov
Michail Bojadziev
George Genchev
Luben Panov
Emil Koshlukov
Ginka Kapitanova
Mariana Vitanova - Head of Parliamentary Information Center

2. CEGA Network seminar in Bankya

George Bogdanov
Lubomir Lazarov - Lobbying and Advocacy
Viktor Djorkov – Executive Director of CEGA
Nikolay Kirilov – Director European Roma Fund (Lom)

December 19th, 2001

1. Ministry of Environment and Waters

Minister Dolores Arsenova
Ms Nelli Ilieva – NGO Relations
Ms Emanuela Georgieva – Deputy Minister
Ms Fatme Ilias – Deputy Minister
Ms Karadjova – Chief of Department
Maria Moleshka – NGO representative
Boriana Hrissimova - NGO representative
Petko Kovachev - NGO representative

**2. Emil Koshlukov - MP
Borislav Tzekov – MP**

3. LGI

Hall Minas – Country Director
Anelia Atanassova – Policy Team Leader
Jordan Sirakov – Program Assistant
Svetla Yankova – Citizen Participation Assistant
Bogdana Sultanova – Team Leader Citizen Participation

4. IEI – Inter Ethnic Initiative

Kalina Bozeva
Angelina Stanoeva

December 20th, 2001

1. MSI

Haward Ockman
Lilia Joujou

2. Public Council of the Parliament Commission

Veliko Sherbanov
Stanimira Hadjimitova

3. FLGR - Foundation for Local Government Initiative

Marina Dimova - Program Assistant

4. Animus

Maria Chomarova – Psychotherapist
Nadia Kozhuharova – Psychologist

Attachment J: Leading Lights Publication

If you are interested in the publication *Leading Lights* please visit our website at iscvt.org.

Attachment K: Summary of NGO Grantees

Name	Tel / Fax	E-mail	Post address	
Ecological Association "Za Zemiata (For Earth)"	02 / 980 41 09	zemiata@iterra.net	56 William Gladstone str., 1000 Sofia	BCAF
"Balkan Initiative for Civil Dialogue" Foundation	02 / 981-58-16	lazarov@capital.bg	38B Vardar blv., entr. B, ap. 71, 1370 Sofia	BCAF
"Center for Social Partnership" Association - Sliven	044 / 7-48-30		Druzhiba zh.k., 40 - G - 20, 8800 Sliven	BCAF
"Chovekolubie(Philanthropy)" Association - Pazardzhik	034/444-844	chovekolubie@dir.bg	12 Dr. Long str.	BCAF
"Civil Society" Foundation - Burgas	056/840-208	pff_org@baraba.com	10 Antim 1st str., fl. 1	BCAF
"Detsko surce (Child's heart)" Association - Sofia	02 / 9532866	childs_heart@lotus-bg.com	3 Yakov Kraikov str., 1606 Sofia	BCAF
"Dimitar Talev" School School Trustee - Dobrich		dtalev@mbox.digsys.bg	16 General Georgi Popov str., 9300 Dobrich	BCAF
"Doverie (Confidence) Center" Association - Burgas	056 / 84 39 63	ananievi@abv.bg	8 Georgi Shagunov str., 8000 Burgas	BCAF
"Doverie (Confidence)" Foundation - Burgas	056 / 32413; 056 / 810093		123 Alexandrovska str., entr. A, fl. 2, Burgas	BCAF
"Dubrash" Foundatioin - Satovcha village	07541-27 13; 30 85		2950 Satovcha village, Blagoevgrad region	BCAF
"Education for Democracy" Center	032 / 26-51-58 ; 62 32 25	center@ngoedu.org	15 K. Fotinov str., Plovdiv	BCAF
"Eyes on Four Paws" Foundation	02 / 986 26 76	e4p@abv.bg	5 Tzar Kaloyan str., 1000 Sofia	BCAF
"Friends of Nature park Vrachanski balkan" club - Vratza	092/ 33149	klubpriатели@abv.bg	51 Podbalkanska str, 3000 Vratza	BCAF
"Gavrosh" Association - Varna	052/300-229	gavroche@vega.bg	3A Voinishka str., 9002 Varna	BCAF
"Open Door Center" Association - Pleven	064 / 4-67-13	opendoor_centre@hotmail.com	Storgozia zh.k., bl. 22, entr. V, fl. 1, ap. 2	BCAF
"Orphan" Foundation - Blagoevgrad	02 / 708106	orphanfound@olb.net	69 Shipchenski Prohod blv., 1574 Sofia	BCAF
"Partners for Local Development" Association - Devin	03041/41-60, 48-56	pmr_devin@yahoo.co.uk	1 Druzhiba str., 4800 Devin	BCAF

"Partnerships and ethosos" Association - Ardino	03651 - 30 76	kapka_pri@abv.bg	6 Sofia str., 6750 Ardino , Kurdjali region	BCAF
"Roden kraj" association - Kustendil	078-28089	rdak@infotel.bg	22 Tzar Simeon, 2500 Kustendil	BCAF
"Social Development" Club - Dobrich	058/264-97, 390-97	club@sd.netplus.db	14 Nezavisimost str., fl. 4, office 407	BCAF
"St. St. Kiril I Methodii" school, school trustee	07541/ 2117	unsatovcha@abv.bg	Satovhca village	BCAF
"Suprichastie (Empathy)" Foundation - Varna	052/459-379	empathy@abv.bg	Varna p.o.b. 239	BCAF
"Svilengrad 2000" Foundation	0379 4724	silvi_georgieva@yahoo.com	3 Svila str., 6500 Svilengrad	BCAF
"World for Everyone" Association	086 / 74620	hr.doneva@mbox.bol.bg	7500 Silistra p.o.b. 283	BCAF
"Yordan Yovkov School School Trustee" Association - Kurdjali	0361 / 2 27 52; 3 85 80	v_todorov_bg@yahoo.com	18 Bulair str., 6600 Kurdjali	BCAF
"Zlatograd municipality development center" Association	03071 / 4406	zcdc@infotel.bg	1 Stefan Stambolov str., 4980 Zlatograd	BCAF
Agrolink Association	846-66-75;	agrolink@abv.bg	50 Ianko Sakuzov str., Sofia	BCAF
Association for Youth Initiatives "Ikar" - Haskovo	048 / 857-088; 038 / 66 74 11	ikar@haskovo.spnet.net	Badema zh.k., bl. 4, fl.5, ap. 41	BCAF
AURRI - Shumen	054/800 478	asrdi@icon.bg	1 Osvobozhdenie sq., hotel Madara, Office 104	BCAF
Bluelink Foundation - Sofia	02 / 217623	pavelan@bluelink.net	114-B Pozitano str., 1303 Sofia	BCAF
Bulgarian association for people with mental difficulties	064-801 303	balizpl@abv.bg	11 Belmeken str, Pleven 5800	BCAF
Bulgarian Balneology Association - Pomorie	0596/25866	lubis37@pomonet.bg	40A Yavorov blv., Pomorie	BCAF
Bulgarian National Consumer Association	02 / 9890106	bnca@abv.bg	8 Hristo Belchev str., 1000 Sofia	BCAF
Center "Maria" - Gorna Oriahovitza	0618 / 42181	center_maria@abv.bg	1 Tzar Osvoboditel str., fl. 3, room 303,5100 Gorna Oriahovitza, V. Turnovo region	BCAF
Center for Ecological Information and Education	02 / 9201341; 02 / 9714820	ceie@iterra.bg	17A Sofronii Vrachanski str., fl. 3, ap. 9, 1303 sofia	BCAF
Center for Independent Living - Varna	052 / 222 402; 052/ 610 240	cil-vn@ultranet.bg	115 Kniaz Boris blv., entr. 3, 9000 Burgas	BCAF

Chamber of trade and industry - Gabrovo	066-331 42; 331 42;	gbcci@mbox.eda.bg	1 Vuzrajane sq, Gabrovo 5300	BCAF
Charity Organization "Milosardie"	042 / 23532	milosardie@hotmail.com	81 Dimitar Asenov str., ap. 4, 6000 Stara Zagora	BCAF
Chitalishte "Light" - Pomorie	0596 / 3593		110 Kniaz Boris 1 str., 8200 Pomorie	BCAF
Community Fund for Development of Lovech Municipality	068/279-52	dr-z@lv.bia-bg.com	40 Targovska str., fl. 4	BCAF
Disabled person's association	0670 32544	hasan_ali_bg@yahoo.com	10 Spas Boyadjiev str, Troyan 5600	BCAF
Ecological Association "Zlatishka Kotlovina" - Pirdop	07181 / 5332	kambana@bkltd.com	2 Alexander Batenberg str., 2070 Pirdop	BCAF
Free Youth Center - Vidin	094 / 36815	fyc@vidin.net	36 Gorazd str., p.o.b. 19, 3700 Vidin	BCAF
Green Balkans Association - Plovdiv	032 / 264516	greenbal@mbox.digsys.bg	160 Shesti Septemvri blv., 4000 Plovdiv	BCAF
National Chitalishte "Liuben Karavelov" - Kurtovo Konare	03146-22 39	chitalishte_k@abv.bg	4223 Kurtovo Konare village, Plovdiv region	BCAF
National Social Rehabilitation Center - Branch Burgas	056 / 841407	nsrc@bse.bg	12 Al. Karamitev str., Burgas	BCAF
New Century Foundation	088 / 705486	hr.doneva@mbox.bol.bg	35 Olshanka str., 7570 Alfatar	BCAF
North Central Region Development Agency - Rousse	082 / 225475; 822712	ncrda@chamber.rousse.bg	3A Ferdinand str., 7000 Rousse	BCAF
Open "Society Club" - Blagoevgrad	073 / 80018; 37009	silvia-osc@avala.bg	1 Vasil Levski str., 2700 Blagoevgrad	BCAF
Open Society Club - Stara Zagora	042 / 600040	osc@sz.osf.bg; hris@osf-sz.inetg.bg	117A Hristo Botev str., 6000 Stara Zagora	BCAF
Public center for Urbanism and Environment - Blagoevgrad	073 / 31640	bahanova@avala.bg	2 Maritza str., ap.52, 2700 Blagoevgrad	BCAF
RAO "Trakia" - Stara Zgagora	042/44-009	varlyakov@ram-trakia.org	102 Tzar Simeon Veliki str., fl. 2	BCAF
School trustee "GCE Ekzarh Josif 1" Association	068 - 2 38 30	lusy_bran@abv.bg	7 Tzar Shishman str, 5500 Lovech	BCAF
Science and technique center - Vratza	092-20320; 22556;	dnt@isv.net	14 Lukashov str, Vratza 3000	BCAF
Support for integration institute	02/ 9633473	mailbox@iisupport.org	19A Kaliakra, 1421 Sofia	BCAF

Traditional culture and sustainable development - Chepelare	088/ 592584	bg_tcsd@hotmail.com	p.o.b. 67, 4004 Plovdiv	BCAF
University emergency and saving detachment	62-56-359	gourev@phys.uni-sofia.bg	5 Baucher blv, Sofia	BCAF
Women's Club "Armmis"	983 17 96	armmis@abv.bg	7 Tzar Osvoboditel blv.	BCAF
Women's union "Proksen" - Kazanluk	0431/204-75	djurkova@yahoo.com	10 Slavyanska str, Kazanluk	BCAF
YMCA - Plovdiv	032 / 620 306	ymca_plv@langame.net	44 G.Kirkov str., ap.15, 4004 Plovdiv	BCAF
Youth Ecological Organization - Rodopi - Shiroka Luka	03030 / 233	sh.luka@mbox.infotel.bg	4710 Shiroka Luka village, Smolian region	BCAF
"Abagar - Oresh" Association	06328/20 81		7 Glavna str, Oresh village, Svishtov	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Aleka Konstantinov" International foundation	0631/2 22 88		2 Todor Miladinov, Svishtov	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Civil activeness" Association - Zavet	08342/21 68	veny_nn@infotel.bg	p.o.b. 35, Zavet, Razgrad district	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Civil university 21" Association - Rousse	082/ 62 85 10	dora@ru.akad.bg	p.o.b. 83, 7015 Rousse	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Friends of the world" Association - Silistra	086/816 273	kery_g@mail.bg	12 Angel Kunchev str, Silistra	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Helis" Association	08331/56 31		70 Vasil Levski str, Isperih	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Hristo Botev" school, school trustee	0857/21 00		18 Aleka Konstantinov str, Tutrakan	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Nikolay Katranov" school school trustee	0631/2 32 31		1 General Dragomirov str, Svishtov	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Otez Paisii" School school trustee	08131/ 22 87		15 Bulgaria blv, Slivo pole village	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Spasenie 97" Foundation	06161/ 34 22, 35 78	salvation97@abv.bg	13 Angel Karaliichev str, Strajitsa 5150	Open Society Club - Rousse
"The human dimenssion" Foundation	082/ 441 448	ssabev@bulgaria.com	108 Dorostol str, 7004 Rousse	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Tutrakan voice" Association - Tutrakan	0857/21 63		7 Transmariska str, Tutrakan	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Tzvetan Radoslavov" school, school trustee	0631/ 2 23 83		66 Cherni vrh str, Svishtov	Open Society Club - Rousse

"Youth initiative" Association - Rouse	082/827 192		4 Slavyanska str, fl2, Rouse	Open Society Club - Rouse
Agency for regional development of Northcentral region	082/822 712	ncrda@chamber.rouse.bg	3A Ferdinand str, fl3, Rouse	Open Society Club - Rouse
Business information and consulting center - Tutrakan	0857/ 22 51	inf_tutrakan@dir.bg	20 Transmariska str, Tutrakan 7600	Open Society Club - Rouse
Charitas - Rouse	082/235 945	caritas@ruse.techo-link.com	3 Bogdan voivoda str, Rouse 7002	Open Society Club - Rouse
Consulting club for civil education	084/ 268 89	kcce@infotel.bg	10 Nikola Vaptzarov str, app2, Razgrad	Open Society Club - Rouse
Danube center for training and development - Svishtov	0631/222 49		bl2 Tzanko Tzerkovski str, Academy hotel, room 212, Svishtov 5250	Open Society Club - Rouse
Earth forever Association - Svishtov	0631/2 59 601	earthforever_sv@abv.bg	59 "Treti mart" str, Svishtov	Open Society Club - Rouse
Ecoglasnos independent association	082/62 48 00		zh.k. Charodeika, bl104, entrB, Rouse 7019	Open Society Club - Rouse
Ecolinks Association - Rouse	082/222 583		6 Olimpi Panov str, Rouse	Open Society Club - Rouse
Employer's Union in Hotel and restaurant business	088 566 669		16 Han Asparuh str, Rouse	Open Society Club - Rouse
English language school "Geo Milev" school trustee	082/ 447 183		3 Alei Vuzrajidane str, Rouse 7002	Open Society Club - Rouse
Initiative for sustainable development "Local agenda 21" - Veliko Turnovo	062/600 361	d_baykova@hotmail.com	3B Veneta Boteva str, Veliko Turnovo	Open Society Club - Rouse
Knowledge sharing association - branch Rouse	048 866 847		p.o.b. 83, 7015 Rouse	Open Society Club - Rouse
Municipality association for tourism	0857 22 51	tutrakan@mbox.infotel.bg	20 Transmariska str, Tutrakan 7600	Open Society Club - Rouse
Nature protection association	084/331 69		18 Babuna str, Razgrad	Open Society Club - Rouse
Regional Association for interethnical tolerance	084/ 202 42	naneva@yahoo.com	zh.k. Orel, bl21, entr.G, app20, 7200 Razgrad	Open Society Club - Rouse
Rouse Trade and Industry Chamber	082/ 233 980	denitsa@chamber.rouss.ebg	3 Ferdinand str, p.o.b. 484, Rouse 7000	Open Society Club - Rouse
School association for global education SAGE - Rouse	082/236 725	jns@ru.acad.bg	40 Maturkova str, Bl.Melnik, entr.A, fl12, Rouse 7000	Open Society Club - Rouse

Technical School "Asen Zlatarov" School Trustee	082/ 442- 011	tz_ruse@exco.rousse.bg	2 Balarev str, Rousse	Open Society Club - Rousse
Turks culutal and educational association "TUNA" - Rousse	082/ 23 39 27		18 Tzurkovna nezavisimost, Rousse 7000	Open Society Club - Rousse
Women's associatioon	08565/ 232		13 Obrazcova str, Iskra village, Silistra	Open Society Club - Rousse
Youth educational center "Shtastliveca"	0631/ 2 87 21		14 Rila str, entrB, app8, Svishtov	Open Society Club - Rousse
"Center for study of political processes" Association	054/ 32039 088/ 690023	pprc_sh@yahoo.com	115 Suedinenie , Shumen 9700	Open Society Club - Varna
"City and culture" Foundation	052/ 242993 607842	koutin@mail.vega.bg	zh.k. Chayka, bl. 17, entB, fl4, app47, Varna 9010	Open Society Club - Varna
"Eco good will fund for Kavarna" Foundation	570/82724,83926, 82001	eko_kavarna@abv.bg	45 Dobrotitsa str, Kavarna 9650	Open Society Club - Varna
"Family zone" Foundation	052/ 335135 088 222038	amdtop@nat.bg	p.o.b. 539, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
"Friends of Byala" Association	05143/ 2560 2906		9 Jordan Noev str, Byala	Open Society Club - Varna
"Han Omurtag - 2000" Association	0605/ 4455 2072	st_todorova@dir.bg	2A zh.k. Alexander Stamboliiski, Omurtag 7900	Open Society Club - Varna
"Help" Foundation	052/ 612 780	hekp@revolta.com	9 Odrin str, Varna 9001	Open Society Club - Varna
"Hristo Smirnenski" school trustee - Vuglen	052/ 826758	gali67@abv.bg	Dubrovnik str, bl8, entE, fl5, app82 Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
"Mayday" Foundation	052/ 306423	mayday@f2f.cx	68 Bratya Miladinovi str, entrV, fl7, app71	Open Society Club - Varna
"PACT Agency" Foundation	052/ 308313, 237438	empatia@abv.bg	3 Baucher str, entG, fl4, app106, Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
"Protected areas - Northern Black sea" Foundation	052/ 608239	zlatni@mail.vega.bg	10 Radko Dimitriev str, Varna 900	Open Society Club - Varna
"St. Climent Ohridski" school, school trustee	052/ 673033	semov2000@yahoo.com	Kichevo village 9151 Varna district	Open Society Club - Varna
"Vision" Foundation	052/ 451140	visia@triafda.bg	155 Vladislav Varnenchik, bl28, entG, fl5, app73, Varna 9009	Open Society Club - Varna

Agency for sustainable regional development and investmnets - Shumen	054/ 800478, 800478	asrldi@icon.bg	1 "Osvobojudenie" sq, app104 Madara hotel, 9700 Shumen	Open Society Club - Varna
Association "Parents of children with cerebral paralysis disease"	052/ 821819 088 580573	roditelite@yahoo.com	bl3 Lozengrad str, entB app30 9002 Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
Association for public benefit "Independent social and ecolgical inspection"	052/ 238239;	rkc@dir.bg	15 Bratya Shkorpil str, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Association for support of people with mental difficulties	052/ 301198 253143	into@mial.vega.bg	zh.k. Chaika, bl5, entB, Varna 9005	Open Society Club - Varna
Black sea center for ecological information and education	052/ 615 856; 602 047	bse@triada.bg; office@bseanetwork.org	12 Sheinovo str, p.o.b. 91, Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
Bulgarian Association for human rights and fair elections - Varna	052/ 253100 259381	bafevn@abv.bg	15 Suborni blv, Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
Bulgrian Black sea municipalities Association	052/ 600266, 500105	absm@revolta.com	41 Raiko Jinzifov str app8, Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
Business Agency Varna	052/ 632764, 632763	stumpf@triada.bg	10 Preslav str, 9000 Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
Center for educationm culture and ecology 21 - Varna	052/ 335689	center21@rednetbg.com		Open Society Club - Varna
Center for students and youth initiatives	054/ 800521	osich@icon.bg	105 Suedinenie str, fl2, Shumen 9700	Open Society Club - Varna
Club "Social development" - Dobrich	058 601 472; 088 242 906	club@sdc.netplusdb.bg	14 Nezavisimost sq, app407, 9300 Dobrich	Open Society Club - Varna
Educational and consultative center for the youth	052/ 602062	ukcm@abv.bg	57 Knyaz Boris 1, str, fl2, Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
Enterpreneurship and management center - Varna	052/ 302756	hlp@ms3.tu-varna.acad.bg; v_naumov2001@yahoo.co.uk	3 Tzar Asen str, Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
Exemplary national chitalishte "Napreduk"	0601/ 27501, 23217		p.o.b. 86, Turgovishte 7700	Open Society Club - Varna
Federation of Independent students associations - Varna	052/ 234371	fiss_varna@hotmail.com	20 Alexander Rechinski str, fl2, Varna	Open Society Club - Varna

Federation of Independent students associations - Varna	052/ 601755 601754	vesselh@mail.bg	115 Knyaz Boris blv, office 8, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Gavrosh Association	052/ 300229	gavroche@vega.bg	3A Voinishka str, Varna 9002	Open Society Club - Varna
High school "D. Talev" school trustee - Dobrich	058/ 783429, 783445	dtalev@e-cart.bg	16 General Georgi Popov, Dobrich 9300	Open Society Club - Varna
Hope for the children - ARGO 21	0608/ 22657 088 994008	argo_21@mail.bg	17 Tzar Osvoboditel str, Popovo 7800	Open Society Club - Varna
Industrial and Economy Chamber	052/ 257249 601604	ia-varna@mbox.digsys.bg	22 Suborni blv, 9000 Varna	Open Society Club - Varna
International Black sea club	052/ 600167		3 Tzar Assen str, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Juridical council for european integration	058/26634 26730	koicheva@mbox.digsys.bg	1 General Kiselov str, Dobrich 930	Open Society Club - Varna
Legal initiative for education and development	052/ 602 619	megan_ta@yahoo.com; pior@abv.bg	8 Joan Ekzarh str, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Lyon's club - Shumen	054/ 64763		2 Pliska str, ent1, fl6, app23, Shumen	Open Society Club - Varna
National chitalishte "Nadejda"	06028/ 397, 210	vardun@abv.bg	Vurdun village 7780 Turgovishte	Open Society Club - Varna
National chitalishte "Nazum Hikmet"	051782/ 201		Lopushna village 9237 Varna district	Open Society Club - Varna
National Chitalishte "Probuda"	05327/ 2147 2068		46 Madarski konnik str, Kaspichan 9930	Open Society Club - Varna
National Chitalishte "Razvitie"	0601/ 44137, 087 505480	chitalishte_vybel@mail.bg	Turgovishte 7701	Open Society Club - Varna
National Chitalishte "St. St. Kiril I Metodii"	0608/ 22662, 22092	hristova_popovo@abv.bg	1 Otetz Paisii str, Popovo 7800	Open Society Club - Varna
National Chitalishte "Vasil Levski"	048/ 787987		Vasil Levski village, Turgovishte 7749	Open Society Club - Varna
National Chitalishte "Yordan Yovkov"	058/ 22531	drekova@abv.bg	44 25th September blv Dobrich 9300	Open Society Club - Varna
NGO Club - Turgovishte	0601/ 23282		30 Bratya Miladinovi str, Turgovishte	Open Society Club - Varna

Non for profit association "King Simeon"	052/ 229465 048/ 841405	koinokoinov@yahoo.com	17 Krustio Mirski str, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Old Varna Foundation	052/ 257303 633085, 633080	bars@tea.bg	5 Kaloyan str, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Public center for environment and sustainable development	052/ 306423	pescd@nat-bg.net	p.o.b 79, Varna 9010	Open Society Club - Varna
Regional environmental center Dobrich		mddch@dobrich.net	p.o.b. 15 Dobrich 9300]	Open Society Club - Varna
Sea Club "Friends of the sea"	052/ 306423	seacub@triada.bg	18 Odrin str, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Tourist associatiom "Madarski konnik"	054/ 59456, 59528		15 hristo Botev str, Shumen 9700	Open Society Club - Varna
Tourist association "Rodni Balkani"	052/ 630283		30 Preslav str, Varna 9000	Open Society Club - Varna
Youth culutral organization "Krivata reka"	0537/ 2459	krivata_reka@yahoo.com	48 Stefan Karadja str, ent1, fl4, app13 Novi Pazar 9900	Open Society Club - Varna
Youth environmental organization "Ecomission"	052/ 605181 601738	ecomission@hotmail.com	zh.k. Vuzrajidane, bl17,entA, fl3, app7 Varna 9020	Open Society Club - Varna
"Road to trust" foundation	038/ 38750	100janova1@usa.net	16 Dragoman str, fl3, Haskovo 6300	Recourse center foundation
"Roden kraj" Foundation	0677/ 4567	homeland@portal.ngorc.net	13 Lyaskov dyal str, 5350 Tryavna	Recourse center foundation
Bulgarian Association for human rights and fair elections	02 / 468841	bafe@internet-bg.net	121 Evlogi Georgiev blv, 1504 Sofia	Recourse center foundation
Consumer center for information and studies	032 / 83121	ydavch@yahoo.com	3 Osvobojdenie blv, office 303, Plovdiv 4023	Recourse center foundation
Economic policy institute	02/ 980 4740	epi@bulnet.bg	17 Liuben Karavelov str, Sofia 1142	Recourse center foundation
Open Society Club - Blagoevgrad	073/ 37009		1 Vasil Levski str, Blagoevgrad	Recourse center foundation
Open society club - Gabrovo	066/ 34105	osinfo@oscg.nat.bg	9 Boryanska str, 5300 Gabrovo	Recourse center foundation
Refugees and Imigrants Association	02 / 980 2049	peregrine@aster.net	5 Angel Kunchev str, 1000 Sofia	Recourse center foundation

Turkish Cultural Center 21st century	02 / 593 239	amiro@internet-bg.net	2A Yoan Ekzarh str, 1000 Sofia	Recourse center foundation
Easteurope humanities institute	02/ 439283		20 Prof Asen Zlatarov str, Sofia 1504	Recourse center foundation
"Child and the nature" Foundation	086/72046	mkasabova@mail.bg	23 Simeon Veliki str, fl5, office 52, Silistra	TIME Foundation
"Information center for Sitovo municipality development" Association	0856/ 3711		72 3-ti mart str, Sitovo village	TIME Foundation
"Municipality energy agency" Foundation	042/ 25098	mea@sz.inetg.bg	107 Tzar Simeon Veliki blv, 6000 Stara Zagora	TIME Foundation
"Regional education center 21" Association	03071/ 4462	zcdc@infotel.bg	1 Slavey str, 4980 Zlatograd	TIME Foundation
Bulgarian Association for bird protection - Haskovo branch	038/ 39444	sakarbg@mbox.digsys.bg	p.o.b. 130, 6300 Haskovo	TIME Foundation
Ecoforum "For the nature"	032/ 945 129	eco2000p@internet-bg.net	85 Polkovnik Sava Maturkov str, app12, Plovdiv	TIME Foundation
LOTOS Civil initiatives Association	068/ 47984	lotoslv@excite.com	33 Bulgaria str, Preslav house, Lovech	TIME Foundation
Open World Association	086/ 72046	mkasabova@mail.bg	23 Simeon Veliki str, fl5, office 52, Silistra	TIME Foundation
Regional energy center Lovech Foundation	068/ 25945	rec@bsbg.net	43 Turgovska str, 5500 Lovech	TIME Foundation
Trigrad Foundation	03040/ 370	f_trigrad@abv.bg	Trigrad village	TIME Foundation
Union of blind people in Bulgaria Association	0676/ 2232			TIME Foundation
Youth association for eEthropole municipality development	0720/ 3668	etro-develop@abv.bg	100 Ruski blv, Ethropole	TIME Foundation
"(Da Suhranim jenata)Safe the woman" Association	052 / 600137	women@europe.com	64 Tzar Osoboditel str., Varna	
"European Spaces 21" Association - Rousse	082 / 232226	euspace@acvilon.com	14 Olimpi Pavlov str., 7000 Ruse	
Association for Bulgarian Culture "St. Dimitar Basarbovski" - Rousse	082 / 823118	office@cosulplus-bg.com,	8 Dragoman sr., 7000 Ruse	
Center for Management and Undertaking	052 / 302756	hlp@ms3.tu-varna.acad.bg	3 Tzar Asen blv., Varna	

Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Rousse	082 / 233980	info@chamber.rousse.bg	3A Ferdinand str., 7000 Ruse	
Federation of Independent Student Societies - Varna	052 / 234371	fiss_varna@hotmail.com	20 Alexander Rachiiski str., Varna	
Industrial Economic Organization	0631 / 22096	asen_bo@yahoo.com	2 Emanuil Chakurov str., 5250 Svishtov	
Industrial Economic Organization - Varna	052 / 257249	ia-varna@mbox.digsys.bg	22 Saborni blv., Varna	
Mayday Foundation	052 / 242949	mayday@f2f.cx	68 Bratia Miladinovi str., Varna	
Open Education Center - Razgrad	084 / 26889	coerz@mbox.infotel.bg	19 Babuna str, 7200 Razgrad	
Regional Development Agency - Razgrad	084 / 29846	rda@mbox.digsys.bg	47 Beli Lom blv., Razgrad	
Regional Ecological Center - Dobrich	058 / 22535		Stariat Oreh sqr., p.o.b. 15, 9300 Dobrich	
Sustainable world Foundation	02/ 980-15-40	ayoveva@aster.net	16-20 Alabin str, Sofia	
Youth Educational Center	046 / 36547	moc@atil.net	31 Stefan Karadja str., 8600 Yambol	

Democracy Network Program II - Bulgaria
Subgrantees of Grant Making Partner Organizations

Date:

No	Name of Organization	Area	Subgrantee	Location	Project	Amount BGN	Amount USD
1	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Public Center for Urbanism and Environment	Blagoevgrad	Marketing and Aestheticising of a cycling alley	8,950.00	4,261.90
2	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Open Society - Stara Zagora	Stara Zagora	Daily Care and Socialization of poor and lonely elderly people with disabilities	16,000.00	7,619.05
3	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Association "Child's Heart"	Sofia	Social Protection of Children	12,000.00	5,714.29
4	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Chitalishte "Light"	Pomorie	Construction of a green zone in the industrial part of Pomorie district	4,500.00	2,142.86
5	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Youth Environmental Organization - Rhodope	Shoroka Luka	Stimulation of the Environmentally Friendly Tourism	10,000.00	4,761.90
6	BCAF	Social Safety Net	National Social Rehabilitation Center, Regional Office	Bourgas	Social Intergration of Young Disabled People	12,700.00	6,047.62
7	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Center "Maria	Gorna Oryahovitza	Together against violence on women and children	13,900.00	6,619.05
8	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Green Balkans	Plovdiv	Conservation of Cinerous Vulture	13,500.00	6,428.57
9	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Orphan Foundation - Sofia	Blagoevgrad Branch	Child Protection Municipal Center - Blagoevgrad	9,800.00	4,666.67
10	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Blue Link Foundation	Sofia	Civil Practices of Access to Environmental Information	8,300.00	3,952.38

11	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Ecological Alliance "The Valley of Zlatitza"	Pirdop	Teaching young people in high-standard environmental culture	12,800.00	6,095.24
12	BCAF	Economic Development	Bulgarian National Consumers Association	Rousse	Consumer protection center in Rousse	9,880.00	4,704.76
13	BCAF	Economic Development	Zlatograd Community Development Center	Zlatograd	Rodosmilk - stimulating the ecological milk production in Zlatograd region and creating new quality trade mark milk	7,996.00	3,807.62
14	BCAF	Economic Development	Association for Sustainable Environmental Solutions AGROLINK	Sofia - Vitosha, Yarlovo, Kovachevzi, Zhelezniza, Chuipetlovo and Bosnek	Startegy of Development of Sothern Part of Vitosha	9,180.00	4,371.43
15	BCAF	Economic Development	Center for Environmental Information and Education	Tchiproviski region	Encouragement of alternative tourism in Chiprovtsi community	3,660.00	1,742.86
16	BCAF	Economic Development	Association "World for Everyone"	Silistra region	Fishery tourism in Pirin	9,000.00	4,285.71
17	BCAF	Economic Development	Pirin Tourist Forum	Blagoevgrad region	Rural tourism in Pirin	13,975.00	6,654.76
18	BCAF	Economic Development	New Century Foundation	Alfatar, Silistra region	Regional development - Pre-condition for joining the EU	5,000.00	2,380.95
19	BCAF	Economic Development	Industrial Economic Association - Svishtov	Svishtov	Establishment of consultancy center for local firms and citizens'informational provision in social security, finance, and marketing	1,714.00	816.19
20	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Youth Educational Center	Yambol	Bridges of Trust	9,300.00	4,428.57

21	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Compassion Charity Organization	Stara Zagora	Protection Net-3	11,972.00	5,700.95
22	BCAF	Economic Development	Bulgarian Balneological Association	Pomorie	Program for sustainable Development of balneological tourism	11,000.00	5,238.10
23	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Youth Environmental Organization "Ecomission", Varna	Varna	Discover Kamen Bryag	16,494.00	7,854.29
24	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Trust Association	Bourgas	We are able to do everything together	11,500.00	5,476.19
25	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Women's Union "Proxen"	Kazanlak	The choice - open door management	12,000.00	5,714.29
26	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Compassion Foundation	Varna	Revival of handcraft	11,000.00	5,238.10
27	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Club for Social Development	Dobrich	Academy for civil dialogue - 3	12,500.00	5,952.38
28	BCAF	Economic Development	Association for Sustainable regional development and investments	Shoumen	Information Business system "Invest in Shumen"	13,000.00	6,190.48
29	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Women's Club "Armiss", Sofia	Tzarevo	Development of a system for psychological and social support and reintegration into society of military personnel and their families in Tzarevo	11,000.00	5,238.10
30	BCAF	Social Safety Net	"Gavrosh" Association	Varna	Social network for support of roma	12,200.00	5,809.52
31	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Civil Society Foundation, Bourgas	Karnobat	Municipality of Karnobat, at the service of citizen	11,216.00	5,340.95
32	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Foundation "Psychological Support"	Sofia	Equal start at school	9,054.00	4,311.43
33	BCAF	Environmental Protection	University Rescue Team,	Sofia	Increasing the efficiency for the mutual work of NGOs and local governments for prevention of environmental accidents	8,000.00	3,809.52

34	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Association "Center for Social Partnership "	Sliven	Parents against crime	11,000.00	5,238.10
35	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Board of Trustees at "Dimitar Talev" School	Dobrich	Alternatives for stimulation of non-violence in Dobrich	8,000.00	3,809.52
36	BCAF	Economic Development	Regional Association of Municipalities "Trakia"	Stara Zagora	Marketing strategy and campaign for the region of Trakia	10,000.00	4,761.90
37	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Association for youth initiatives "Ikarus"	Haskovo	Support of orphans with spinal distortions	13,000.00	6,190.48
38	BCAF	Economic Development	Mayday Foundation	Varna	Electronic Signature	9,500.00	4,523.81
39	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Community Fund for the development of Lovech	Lovech	For a cleaner town	13,000.00	6,190.48
40	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Center Open Door	Pleven	Stop the violence	5,760.00	2,742.86
41	BCAF	Economic Development	Partners for Local Development	Devin	Citizens, local government and businesses - for a sustainable local development through building an attractive route for walking tourism	10,000.00	4,761.90
42	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Sustainable World Foundation	Sofia	Biking to school	12,000.00	5,714.29
43	BCAF	Advocacy	Education for Democracy Center - Plovdiv	Plovdiv	Mobilizing citizen participation in solving local problems through community organizing	26,740.00	12,733.33
44	BCAF	Advocacy	Balkan Initiative for Citizen Dialogue	National	Information campaign	27,544.00	13,116.19
45	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Center for Independent Life - Varna	Varna	Establishment of center for social protection for disabled people /	10,000.00	4,761.90

46	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Society of the disabled -	Troyan	Construction of facilities that will improve the access to schools, hospitals, administrative buildings, etc.	12,000.00	5,714.29
47	BCAF	Environmental Protection	School Board "Exharh Yosif I" school,	Lovech	Helping the students develop environmental skills and knowledge in the sphere of environmental protection	1,540.00	733.33
48	BCAF	Economic Development	North Central Regional Development Agency	Rousse	Formation of common policy for stimulation of economic development.	14,000.00	6,666.67
49	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Trust Center	Bourgas	Support of Young People with mental problems to develop skills in gardening.	9,500.00	4,523.81
50	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Svilengrad 2000 Foundation	Svilengrad	Improvement of the urban environment in Svilengrad, waste collection, cleaning of illegal dung-hills, etc.	12,791.00	6,090.95
51	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Help Foundation	Varna	Support to women in risk - ex prisoners or currently imprisoned	11,000.00	5,238.10
52	BCAF	Environmental Protection	School Board Association "Yordan Yovkov School	Kardzhali	Preservation of the threatened with extinction biological species, minerals, etc.	10,988.96	5,232.84
53	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Narodno Chitalishte "L. Karavelov" -	Kurtovo Konare, Satovcha and Gurmen Municipalities	Creating and cultivating the park and garden near the chitalishte.	4,200.00	2,000.00
54	BCAF	Economic Development	Za Zemyata	Sofia	Energy Efficiency in Sapareva Banya	6,428.90	3,061.38
55	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Eyes on four paws Foundation	Sofia	Promotion of the idea for guidedogs for the blinded people	9,500.00	4,523.81
56	BCAF	Economic Development	Gabrovo Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Gabrovo	Development of socio-economic profile of Gabrovo district .	10,500.00	5,000.00

57	BCAF	Economic Development	Regional Development Foundation "Dabrash"	Satovcha, Blagoevgrad District	Support of poor people to start their business.	13,500.00	6,428.57
58	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Partnerships and ethnoses Association	Ardino	Medical and social services to socially disadvantaged people in Ardino	9,000.00	4,285.71
59	BCAF	Economic Development	Agency for Sustainable Regional Development and Investment - Shumen	Shoumen	Provision of information and services to business	515.00	245.24
60	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Association for Youth Initiatives IKAR - Haskovo	Haskovo	Care for children with medical problems	1,445.00	688.10
61	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Board of School Trustees of the D.Talev secondary School - Dobrich	Dobrich	Violence prevention by parents community	1,998.16	951.50
62	BCAF	Economic Development	Bulgarian Balneological Association - Pomorie	Pomorie	Sustainable development of balneotourism	1,000.00	476.19
63	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Bulgarian Association for persons with mental disabilities - Pleven	Pleven	Services to socially disadvantaged children	5,386.10	2,564.81
64	BCAF	Economic Development	Traditional culture and Sustainable development - Chepelare	Chepelare	Karst World - development of alternative tourism	5,989.00	2,851.90
65	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Open Society Club - Blagoevgrad	Blagoevgrad region	Social services to old people from isolated small settlements	5,996.00	2,855.24
66	BCAF	Economic Development	School Board at secondary school "Cyril and Methodius" - Satovcha	Satovcha, Blagoevgrad District	Social entrepreneurship for young people	5,900.38	2,809.70
67	BCAF	Social Safety Net	YMCA - Plovdiv	Boykovo, Plovdiv district	Support to orphans	5,995.11	2,854.81

68	BCAF	Economic Development	Friends of Vrachanski Balkan Natural Park Club - Vratza	Pavolche, Vratza district	Tourism development	5,350.41	2,547.81
69	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Free Youth Center	Vidin region	Social entrepreneurship for orphans	5,694.00	2,711.43
70	BCAF	Economic Development	Regional Association for reform and regional development "Rodni kraj" - Kjustendil	Dragovishtitza region	Perspective business development in the village	5,319.00	2,532.86
71	BCAF	Social Safety Net	House of Science and Technology - Vratza	Vratza	Services to disadvantaged children	4,000.00	1,904.76
72	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Women's club Armis - 21 century - Sofia	Blagoevgrad, Belene	Complex services for dismissed military personnel	1,600.00	761.90
73	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Doverie (Trust) Association - Bourgas	Bourgas	Innovative complex services to disabled children	1,035.15	492.93
74	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Open Door Centre - Pleven	Pleven region	Services to victims of domestic violence	1,400.00	666.67
75	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Social Development Club - Dobrich	Shoumen and silistra	Services and training of Jury members	1,986.00	945.71
76	BCAF	Economic Development	Bulgarian National Consumers Association	Rousse	Consumers protection	3,405.40	1,621.62
77	BCAF	Social Safety Net	National Social rehabilitation Center - Bourgas	Bourgas	Social integration of young disabled people	3,983.00	1,896.67
78	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Chitalishte "Svetlina" - Pomorie	Pomorie	A green zone construction in the industrial part of Pomorie district	3,586.00	1,707.62
79	BCAF	Economic Development	Center for Environmental Information and Education	Chiprovtsi	Development of environmental tourism	3,993.36	1,901.60
80	BCAF	Economic Development	Partners for local Development Association - Devin	Devin	Development of tourism as local alternative for income generation	2,000.00	952.38

81	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	PROXEN Women's Union - Kazanluk	Kazanluk municipality	Improvement of the services of local administration	2,000.00	952.38
82	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Youth Environmental Organization - Ecomission - Varna	Kamen Bryag, Kavarna municipality	Development of local capacity for tourism	500.00	238.10
83	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Association for Assistance and protection of individuals with mental disabilities Chovekoljubie	Pazardjik	Services for disabled people - entrepreneurship development	1,905.00	907.14
84	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Compassion Foundation - Varna	Varna	Development of social entrepreneurship skills for blind people	1,978.00	941.90
85	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Community Fund for Development of Lovech Municipality	Lovech	Improvement of the urban environment through active citizen participation	750.00	357.14
86	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Psychological Support Foundation	Sofia, Rousse, Pleven	Services for institutionalised children	882.45	420.21
87	BCAF	Economic Development	Association for sustainable environmental solutions AGROLINK	South pat of Vitosha - 5 villages	Sustainable rural development	4,000.00	1,904.76
88	BCAF	Democracy Strengthening	Compassion Charity Organization - Stara Zagora	Stara Zagora	Improvement of services of public institutions	3,990.00	1,900.00
89	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Public center for Urbanism and Environment - Blagoevgrad	Blagoevgrad	Marking and aestheticising of a cycling alley	4,000.00	1,904.76
90	BCAF	Environmental Protection	Sustainable World Foundation	Sofia	Improvement of urban environment in Sofia	900.00	428.57
91	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Open Society Club - Stara Zagora	Stara Zagora	Social services to old people	3,800.00	1,809.52
92	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Institute for Integration Support	Sofia	Services to children with development disabilities	5,400.00	2,571.43

93	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Chovekolubie Association	Pazardjik	Attelie 99	4,977.00	2,370.00	353,333.33
94	BCAF	Social Safety Net	Open Door Centre - Pleven	Pleven region	Equal start at school	4,756.62	2,265.06	
95	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	REC - Dobrich	Dobrich	Cleaning of Dobrich river - roma students involvement	7,400.00	3,523.81	
96	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Lions Club - Shoumen	Shoumen	Elaboration of audio-visual heal educational program introducing basic knowledge on prevention of drug abuse	6,665.00	3,173.81	
97	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Juridical Council of European Integration	Dobrich	Free Law Relief for People under Unfavorable Circumstances	10,262.48	4,886.90	
98	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Union of Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities (UBBSLA)	Varna	Public Demand for a Varna Region Socially Consistent Energy Policy	9,582.00	4,562.86	
99	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	The EcoGoodwill Fund of Kavarna Foundation	Kavarna	Support of the environmental training of schoolchildren in Kavarna and Shabla Municipalities	7,881.00	3,752.86	
100	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Social Development Club	Dobrich	Building up of a mechanism for interaction between civil organizations and local authorities	9,754.00	4,644.76	
101	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Black Sea center for Environmental Information and Education	Varna	Public advocacy initiative for a responsible Bulgarian coastal zones development policy	7,890.61	3,757.43	
102	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Varna Business Agency	Varna	Reducing the administrative restrictions for business development in Varna District	12,000.00	5,714.29	

103	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Industrial Association Varna	Varna	Database system supporting proposals for international projects and programs	4,931.00	2,348.10
104	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Local Government and Entrepreneurship Center (LGEC)	Varna	Specialised computer courses for trainees engaged in medical and administrative reforms	9,320.00	4,438.10
105	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Federation of Independent Student Society - Varna	Varna	Building of a partnership network for young people's entrepreneurship, training	7,694.00	3,663.81
106	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	INTPSYCH - Society for support of people with learning disabilities	Varna	Solidarity with people with specoal needs	7,398.00	3,522.86
107	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Marine Club "Friends of the Sea"	Varna	Development of the capabilities and activity of the civil organizations at the North Black Sea Shore for the realization of public effective projects	6,935.00	3,302.38
108	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Preservation of Women Association	Varna	Alternatives for social and professional orientation of unemployed nurses and other medical specialists	7,866.92	3,746.15
109	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	HELP foundation - Varna	Varna Region	Social and legal Protection of prisoners in Varna region. Improved information for available employment, individual and group consultations, etc.	9,845.00	4,688.10
110	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Mayday Foundation - Varna	Byala	Tourism development	8,966.00	4,269.52

111	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Varna Business Agency	Varna	Business profiles development for 20 microbusiness startups of strategic importance for the Varna region.	8,026.00	3,821.90
112	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Cultural Club - Hope	Vardun	Continuous social defence by professional qualification	4,340.00	2,066.67
113	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Judicial Council of European Integration	Dobrich	Free law relief for people under reduced circumstances - III phase	7,052.52	3,358.34
114	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Association for support of people with mental disabilities	Varna	Independence through education	9,299.52	4,428.34
115	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	TO keep the woman Association	Varna	Girls support at a professional crossroad	10,000.00	4,761.90
116	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Family Zone Foundation	Varna	The power-use but don't abuse	7,987.00	3,803.33
117	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Industrial Association - Varna	Varna	Establishment of friendly environment for the development of the marine industry.	9,989.50	4,756.90
118	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Youth Culture organization "Krivata Reka"	Novi Pazar	Recruitment of information for production companies in agricultural sphere, food, wine and tobacco industries	7,008.75	3,337.50
119	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	People's Community Center "St. St. Cyril and Methodius"	Popovo	Consulting center for juridical support of socially weak people and families in Popovo region.	6,856.00	3,264.76
120	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Association Han Omurtag - 2000	Omurtag	Future for Unemployed Youngsters	7,158.00	3,408.57
121	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Agency for Sustainable Regional Development and Investment - Shumen	Shoumen	"Produced in the region of Shumen"	5,040.00	2,400.00

122	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	School Board "Hristo Smirnenki" - Varna	Varna	"let's clean our piece of the Earth today to have a place to live tomorrow"	4,144.00	1,973.33
123	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	City and Culture Foundation	Varna	Regional Network for Stimulating Civil Culture	3,799.00	1,809.05
124	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Center for Education, Culture and Ecology (Center 21)	Varna	Building a partnership for the optimization of environment "School for All"	6,510.00	3,100.00
125	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Help Foundation	Varna	Varna Prison, the Municipality Service for Social Subsidy.	9,655.00	4,597.62
126	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Mayday Foundation	Varna	The sea is not just a vacation " - advocacy to raise public awareness on the environmental issues of the Northern Black Sea Coast	9,382.00	4,467.62
127	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Public Environmental Center for Sustainable Development	Varna	Resource Pack for provided NGO services	5,980.00	2,847.62
128	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Center for Independent Life - Varna	Varna	Administrative-law services for disabled people	9,250.00	4,404.76
129	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	The ecogoodwill Fund of Kavarna	Kavarna	Waste products - the wealth of the reasonable people	6,500.00	3,095.24
130	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Federation of Independent Student Societies - Varna	Varna	Setting up a system for distance management and control of the administrative servicing of physical and juridical persons.	8,990.00	4,280.95
131	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Association of parents of children with cerebral palsy	Varna	Happy Summer - 2002	9,976.65	4,750.79
132	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Chitalishte Vassil Levski	Targovishte region	Children - active participants in preservation and aesthetics on surrounding environment	4,060.00	1,933.33

133	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	VISION Foundation - Varna	Varna, Varbika, Byala Reka	Creating employment and stimulating social and civil activity of population in varbika Region - vilage Biala Reka.	10,000.00	4,761.90
134	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	NGO Club - Targovishte	Targovishte	Civil Society in the focal point of Mass Media	9,200.00	4,380.95
135	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Social Development Club - Dobrich	Dobrich	Citizen - police: Public Control and Trust"	9,800.00	4,666.67
136	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Youth Environmental Organization - Ecomission	Kavarna	Yaylata - herigate for the future	9,771.70	4,653.19
137	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Sea Club Friends of the Sea - Varna	Varna, Kavarna	Summer marine academy	15,495.00	7,378.57
138	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Youth and Student's activity Center	Shoumen	Labor law and social insurance system educational program	5,420.00	2,580.95
139	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Association POLitical Processes Research Center	Shoumen	Improvement of the cooperation b/n citizens and the local authorities in the municipality of Venez	6,465.00	3,078.57
140	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	BAFECE	Varna	"My home , my street, my municipality"	9,633.00	4,587.14
141	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Community Center Razvitie - Targovishte	Targovishte	The community center - place for public approach at global information society"	9,100.00	4,333.33
142	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Independent ecological and Social Inspection	Suvarovo and Valchi Dol municipality, Varna district	Conduction of labor relations analysis within the commercial enterprises	4,500.00	2,142.86
143	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Tourist Association "Rodni balkani" - Varna	Varna	Green summer camps for students	2,854.00	1,359.05
144	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	NGO "Tzar Simeon I"	Sladka Voda village, Varna district	Summer schools	4,057.00	1,931.90

145	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	The School board of the primary school "St. Kl. Ohridski" Kitchevo village	Kitchevo village	Internet in the country school	9,706.00	4,621.90
146	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Old Varna Foundation	Varna region	Strategic planning for advertising Varna as cultural tourism destination	8,300.00	3,952.38
147	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Cultural Center - "Nazam Hikmet"	Lopushna, Partizani, Medovec, Sladka voda villages, Dalgopol municipality	Mutual cultural project - newspaper "Tulip" created by the young people and fulfillment of a media campaign	6,716.00	3,198.10
148	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	City and Culture Foundation	Varna district	Summer school for studying the mediaval Bulgarian culture for children	3,500.00	1,666.67
149	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Agency Pakt Foundation	Varna	Education, Youth activities, sport direction; Family zone Foundation	8,123.00	3,868.10
150	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Family Zone Foundation	Varna	Summer workshop 2002 for students; work in 4 programs	6,048.43	2,880.20
151	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Marine Club "Friends of the Sea"	Varna	Common efforts for improvement of the valley between Kavarna and Resorts side of the beach	9,870.00	4,700.00
152	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	Youth Environmental Organization "Ecomission", Varna	Varna	Campaign "Green Money for my home"	7,796.41	3,712.58
153	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	City and Culture Foundation	Varna	Civic Culture - the Young and the Institutions of Power	10,318.00	4,913.33
154	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Training and Consulting Center for Young People	varna	Stimulation of Effective Communication between City Administration and the Authorities	9,345.00	4,450.00

155	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Jordan Jivkov Community Center	Dobrich	Tax-free training for talented children of unequal status in the schools and clubs at Jordan Jivkov Community Center	5,307.00	2,527.14
156	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Center for Independent Life - Varna	Varna	Center for Social Law Culture	5,700.00	2,714.29
157	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	Tourist Association "Rodni Balkani" - Varna	Varna	Recreation of traditional tourist routes at the nearest Varna area	8,359.00	3,980.48
158	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	International Black Sea Club	Varna	Development of a network of wholesale markets in the Varna region	7,960.00	3,790.48
159	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	The Board of Trustees of Dimitar Talev Secondary School	Dobrich	Beautiful World Project	11,000.00	5,238.10
160	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	Public Environmental Center for Sustainable Development	Varna	"The Bet"	8,720.00	4,152.38
161	Open Society Club - Varna	Economic Development	Friends of Byala Association	Byala	Building of International Students Demonstration Center for Geology and Paleontology	6,914.00	3,292.38
162	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	Foundation "Protected Territories - Northern Black Sea Coast"	Varna	We in the Nature	7,634.40	3,635.43
163	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Legal Initiative for Training and Development (PIOR)	Varna	Access to Court Information - Rights and Obligations	10,500.00	5,000.00
164	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Gavroshe Association	Varna	From Children to Children - Integration of Street Children through sports and art.	7,000.00	3,333.33
165	Open Society Club - Varna	Social Safety Net	Judicial Council of European Integration	Dobrich	Free law relief for people under reduced circumstances - II phase	9,369.00	4,461.43

166	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	"Youth Culture Organization "Krivata Reka"	Novi Pazar	Cleaning and Improving the central part of Novi Pazar town	3,671.60	1,748.38	
167	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	"Razvitiye Community Center - Targovishte	Targovishte	The community center - partner for achieving ecological balance	3,946.91	1,879.48	
168	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Napredak Community Center - Targovishte	Targovishte	Sustainable integration of children of various ethnic origin - promotion of healthy and environmental education and behaviour in the society	2,453.00	1,168.10	
169	Open Society Club - Varna	Multiple Areas or Unknown	NGO Club - Targovishte	Targovishte	Support of the third sector in the region of Targovishte	3,995.00	1,902.38	
170	Open Society Club - Varna	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Political Process Research Center	Shoumen	The Coppersmith's Trade - a traditional Roma trade	3,252.80	1,548.95	
171	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	Hope for the Children - ARGO 21	Popovo	The nature works for us - we take of nature	3,503.00	1,668.10	
172	Open Society Club - Varna	Democracy Strengthening	Probuda Community Center	Kaspichan	First Steps initiative for civil society promotion in the Kaspichan municipality	1,957.00	931.90	
173	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	Tourist Organization "Madara Horseman" - Shumen	Shoumen	"Creation of an eco-path "Madara Horseman"	4,000.00	1,904.76	
174	Open Society Club - Varna	Environmental Protection	St.St. Cyril and Methodius Community Center	Popovo	New life for the park"	2,730.00	1,300.00	280,660.10
175	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Open Society Club - Blagoevgrad	Blagoevgrad		10,000.00	4,761.90	
176	RC Foundation	Democracy Strengthening	Open Society Club - Blagoevgrad	Blagoevgrad	Prevention and re-socialization of the law violators	10,000.00	4,761.90	
177	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Bulgarian Association for fair elections and civil rights - Sofia	International		10,000.00	4,761.90	

178	RC Foundation	Democracy Strengthening	Bulgarian Association for fair elections and civil rights - Sofia	International	Counting of the election votes within the development of the democratic institutions and the civil society in Eastern Europe	3,000.00	1,428.57
179	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Varna Business Agency	Varna and the region		9,062.00	4,315.24
180	RC Foundation	Economic Development	Varna Business Agency	Varna and the region	Multi-purpose Information bureau and Internet-positional services for business launching	9,990.00	4,757.14
181	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Institute for East Europe Humanitarian Studies	Rhodopi Mountain Area		5,000.00	2,380.95
182	RC Foundation	Democracy Strengthening	Institute for East Europe Humanitarian Studies	Rhodopi Mountain Area	Resolution of conflict situations in the regions with mixed population	6,536.24	3,112.50
183	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Open Society Club - Gabrovo	Gabrovo		10,000.00	4,761.90
184	RC Foundation	Economic Development	Open Society Club - Gabrovo	Gabrovo	Investments for Gabrovo- a project implementation unit	9,900.00	4,714.29
185	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Roads to Trust Foundation - Haskovo	Haskovo and the region		9,510.00	4,528.57
186	RC Foundation	Democracy Strengthening	Roads to Trust Foundation - Haskovo	Haskovo and the region	Drawing up of a strategy for a protection against drugs addiction under the work with youth	10,735.00	5,111.90
187	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	NGO Club - Targovishte	Targovishte and the region		3,500.00	1,666.67
188	RC Foundation	Democracy Strengthening	NGO Club - Targovishte	Targovishte and the region	Popularization of the volunteering as an effective form of the citizens within the third sector	9,339.00	4,447.14
189	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Turkish Cultural Center - 21st Century - Sofia	Shoumen, Razgrad, Kardjali		10,000.00	4,761.90

190	RC Foundation	Democracy Strengthening	Turkish Cultural Center - 21st Century - Sofia	Shoumen, Razgrad, Kardjali	NGO - a way to solve our problems alone	10,500.00	5,000.00	
191	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Refugees and Imigrants Association			10,000.00	4,761.90	
192	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Economic policy institute			10,000.00	4,761.90	
193	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Open Society Club - Stara Zagora			5,000.00	2,380.95	
194	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Consumer center for information and studies			9,000.00	4,285.71	
195	RC Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	"Roden kraj" Foundation			10,000.00	4,761.90	86,224.88
196	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Info Eco Club	Vratza	Lobbying activities - Biodiversity Law	23,898.00	11,380.00	
197	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	SNC Green Balkans	Plovdiv	Lobbying activities - Biodiversity Law	7,546.15	3,593.40	
198	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Mladezhko Sdruzhenie za razvitie na obshtina Etropole	Etropole	The youht and alternative tourism - a factor for a local sustainable development	15,490.00	7,376.19	
199	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Oblasten energien center	Lovech	The renewable energy sources (RES) - premise for sustainable development and protection of the environment in Troian municipality	13,566.20	6,460.10	
200	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Sdruzhenie "Regionalen Obrazovatelyen Zentur - 21"	Zlatograd	The Zlatograd's uniuie ethnographic complex - traditions, future, and place for alternative tourism.	16,758.00	7,980.00	
201	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	"Association " International Center for Coordination of Environmental Information about Danube River'	Belene Region	The bee-keeping - an alternative for sustainable development of Belene Municipality"	10,895.00	5,188.10	
202	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	"Association Pirin Forum	Hadzhidimovo Municipality	Local sustainable development practices	12,324.00	5,868.57	

203	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Obshtesten Tzentar za Okolna Sreda I ustoichivo razvitie	Varna	Reducing the waste of natural resources on the national level.	6,404.00	3,049.52
204	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Za Zemyata	Sofia	Energy Efficiency	7,980.00	3,800.00
205	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Bulgarsko Druzhestvo Za Zashtita na Ptizite (Bird Life) Haskovo	Haskovo	Creation of sustainable partnerships between local people, authorities and tourist companies - ecotourism in the area	6,048.22	2,880.10
206	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Obshtinska Energiina Agenziya , Stara Zagora	St. Zagora	Regional Energy Efficiency Policy	7,800.00	3,714.29
207	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Asociacia za Grazhdanski Iniziativi - Lotos	Lovech	Development of alternative tourism in the vilages of Krushuna and Devetaki, Lovech region	7,767.00	3,698.57
208	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Fondaziya Trigrad	Trigrad	Local sustainable development practices	9,493.00	4,520.48
209	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	"Partniorstvo za ustoichivo razvitie" - Sofia	Kalofer and Samokov	Local sustainable development practices	7,556.09	3,598.14
210	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Sdrujenie "Za diva priroda Balkani"	Kresna, Sofia	"Struma" highway, "Kresna gorge" section - the balanced solution	6,978.00	3,322.86
211	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	SDP Balkani			3,797.60	1,808.38
212	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Bulgarsko Druzhestvo Za Zashtita na Ptizite (Bird Life) Haskovo			2,123.60	1,011.24
213	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Priroden fond			1,299.20	618.67
214	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Semperviva			700.40	333.52
215	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Sauz na Specialistite po parkovete I landshafta v Bulgaria			656.40	312.57

216	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Obshtesten Tzentar za Okolna Sreda I ustoichivo razvitie			15,285.00	7,278.57	
217	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Ecoforum za prirodata			18,000.00	8,571.43	
218	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Sea club			6,718.00	3,199.05	
219	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Agrolink			7,940.00	3,780.95	
220	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Bulgaria-Swiss program for biodiversity			6,943.00	3,306.19	
221	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Obshtinski centar Sitovo			6,979.25	3,323.45	
222	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Otvoren Sviat			7,235.29	3,445.38	
223	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Saiuz na slepite v Bulgaria Drianovo			7,820.00	3,723.81	
224	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	SDP Balkani - VEES			7,435.00	3,540.48	
225	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Informacionen I ucheben center po ekologia			6,789.00	3,232.86	
226	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Sdrujenie Demetra			6,786.74	3,231.78	
227	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Sdrujenie Za Zemiata - Kresna			8,712.00	4,148.57	
228	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Environmental Protection	Sdrujenie "Za Zemiata" - Vlazi			18,380.40	8,752.57	
229	TIME Ecoprojects Foundation	Multiple Areas or Unknown	Through Quick Activity Fund			4,975.92	2,369.49	142,419.27
230	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Public Council for Friendship	Razgrad	EthnoCultural dialogues for tolerance	612.00	291.43	
231	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	EuroSpaces 21	Rousse	"The Short Cut" - dialogue between citizens and local and regional authorities on service provision	8,995.46	4,283.55	

232	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Association for Environmental Protection	Razgrad	Training of students on pollution of Beli Lom river	4,780.00	2,276.19
233	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Center for Civic Education	Razgrad	Young People as Partners of Local Authorities	4,861.00	2,314.76
234	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	School Board of Trustees	Batishnitsa, Rousse region	Village and Health	1,055.50	502.62
235	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Agency for Regional Development of North Central Region	Rousse	Information and Consultancy Center for Regional Projects	9,943.00	4,734.76
236	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	School Association for Global Education - SAGE Rousse	Rousse	The Personality of Civil Society - Conflicts and Communication	7,200.00	3,428.57
237	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Rousse Chamber of Commerce	Rousse	Practical Guide for SME development	4,727.00	2,250.95
238	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Association for Bulgarian Culture - Rousse	Rousse	Eco Field for Volunteer	4,987.00	2,374.76
239	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	School Board of Trustees, ELSchool	Rousse	School Self Governance	1,200.00	571.43
240	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Agency for Regional Development - Razgrad	Razgrad	Publishing of Business reference book	6,897.00	3,284.29
241	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Sustainable Development Initiative "Local Agenda 21" VT	Veliko Tarnovo	Creating opportunities for Regional Development - "Business Incubator"	9,220.00	4,390.48
242	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Civic initiative association - Zavet	Razgrad district	"Trust Yourself" - promotion of civic initiative in decision making on local development issues, education for democratic values, stimulation of civic participation	7,149.00	3,404.29

243	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Youth Initiative	Rousse	Better informed young people about their civil rights	7,365.00	3,507.14
244	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Aleko Konstantinov International Foundation	Svishtov	"Balkan Youth Forum"	8,430.00	4,014.29
245	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Regional Association for Interethnic Tolerance	Razgrad	Cross-cultural initiatives and respect for pluralism in society	8,053.00	3,834.76
246	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Community Council of Bee-keepers	Veliko Tarnovo	Development of sustainable prerequisites for promising small and family businesses	9,955.00	4,740.48
247	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	World for Everyone	Silistra	Information campaign and educational activities for people working in small enterprises in order to persuade them to sweep off paper for recycling.	4,750.00	2,261.90
248	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Earth forever	Svishtov	Building of open-air kindergarden in Rila resident district of Svishtov	4,939.00	2,351.90
249	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Human Dimension Foundation	Rousse	The Orphanage - the Way to the family"	7,000.00	3,333.33
250	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Tuna Association - Rousse	Rousse	Cross-cultural initiatives and education for multiethnic tolerance	5,705.00	2,716.67
251	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Eco Links - Rousse	Rousse	partnerships between NGOs and local authorities on regional development issues	6,528.00	3,108.57
252	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Business Information and Consultancy Center -	Tutrakan	Opportunities for employment	8,634.00	4,111.43
253	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Community Tourist Association	Tutrakan	Urban environmental improvement	4,573.00	2,177.62
254	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Civic University 21 Association	Rousse	Environmental education, partnership among sectors on environmental issues	3,363.00	1,601.43

255	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	School Board of Trustees, "Assen Zlatarov School	Rousse	Prevention of youth unemployment - series of conferences, lectures, trainings	7,336.00	3,493.33
256	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Union of Employers in the Hotel and Restaurant Services Sector	Rousse	"Support to the hotel-and restaurant keepers"	12,438.00	5,922.86
257	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Association "Friends of the World "	Silistra	Three Ethnic Groups - One Heart	8,064.00	3,840.00
258	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	The Voice of Tutrakan	Tutrakan	"I am governed-I want to know how"	3,458.00	1,646.67
259	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Salvation 97 Foundation	Strazhitza, VT District	"From social relieves to own earnings"	5,371.00	2,557.62
260	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	"Helis" Association	Isperih	"Reserved Past - Protected Nature"	7,000.00	3,333.33
261	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	The School Board "Tz. Radoslavov" School	Svishtov	"My school - a pattern of sustainable development"	3,711.00	1,767.14
262	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	"Shtastlivetza" Youth Center	Svishtov	"Together for clean Svishtov	3,405.00	1,621.43
263	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Abagar-Oresh" Association	Oresh, Svishtov Region	"Life giving river"	6,980.00	3,323.81
264	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	The School Board "Hristo Botev" School	Tutrakan	Reconstruction and Landscape Gardening of the Schoolyard of the school	6,607.00	3,146.19
265	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	"Association of Women" - I	Iskra, Sitovo Municipality, Silistra Region	"To achive a children's dream"	5,179.00	2,466.19
266	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	" Danube Training and Development Center"	Svishtov	Comparative Advantages of Svishtov Municipality	8,216.00	3,912.38
267	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Catholic organization Caritas - Rousse	Rousse	Children's Playground of Health	6,480.00	3,085.71
268	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	School Board of "N. Kartanov" High School	Svishtov	"Radio Katranov"	10,102.00	4,810.48

269	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	School Board "Otez Paisii" School	Slivo Pole	Future for Everybody	4,601.00	2,190.95	
270	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Territorial Association for Dissemination of Knowledge	Rousse, Tutrakan, Silistra	Young people from both sides of the Danube river -let's keep the biodiversity of our river !	4,909.00	2,337.62	
271	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Independent association Ecoglasnost	Rousse	"Cleanness in green	6,479.00	3,085.24	
272	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Chamber of Commerce - Rousse	Rousse	"Success stories in export"	5,565.00	2,650.00	
273	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Bulgarian Cultural Association "St. Dimitar Besarabovski"	Rousse	"Ecopath for volunteers -	4,988.00	2,375.24	
274	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Open Education Center - Razgrad	Razgrad	"The personality in civil society - conflicts and communication"	7,000.00	3,333.33	
275	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Agency for Regional Development of North-Central Region	Rousse	"Informational consultation center for regional projects II	7,473.00	3,558.57	
276	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	School Board of Trustees of ELS Geo Milev	Rousse	"Club: Young Reporters"	2,883.00	1,372.86	
277	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Community Association for Tourism - Tutrakan	Tutrakan	"Refirbishing of a water basin"	4,995.00	2,378.57	
278	Open Society Club - Rousse	Economic Development	Business Information and Consultancy Center - Tutrakan	Tutrakan	"Fishing - main source of income for Tutrakan	6,579.00	3,132.86	
279	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	Eco Links - Rousse	Rousse	Ombudsman in the local government in Rousse	3,656.00	1,740.95	
280	Open Society Club - Rousse	Environmental Protection	Association "World for Everyone"	Silistra		4,410.00	2,100.00	
281	Open Society Club - Rousse	Democracy Strengthening	EuroSpaces 21	Rousse	On the short cut - II	4,590.00	2,185.71	
								149,236.65

TOTAL OSC - ROUSSE

1,011,874.22

Attachment L: *Sense of Empowerment* Video

The *Sense of Empowerment* video is not included in this electronic document. If you are interested in a copy of this video, please contact the Institute for Sustainable Communities at 802-229-2900 or isc@iscvt.org.